

2

✓
THE NEW

Mode of Swearing

IN

SCOTLAND,

(Tactis et deosculatis Evangeliiis)

By Touching and Kissing of the Gospels,
CONSIDER'D.

Where some Light is occasionally offer'd into
the Nature of SCANDAL.

By a Lover of the Truth and Peace.

Deut. 10. 20. *Thou shalt ----- swear by his Name.*

Chap. 12. V. 30, 31. *Take Heed to thy self ----- Thou shalt not do so, unto the LORD thy GOD, &c.*

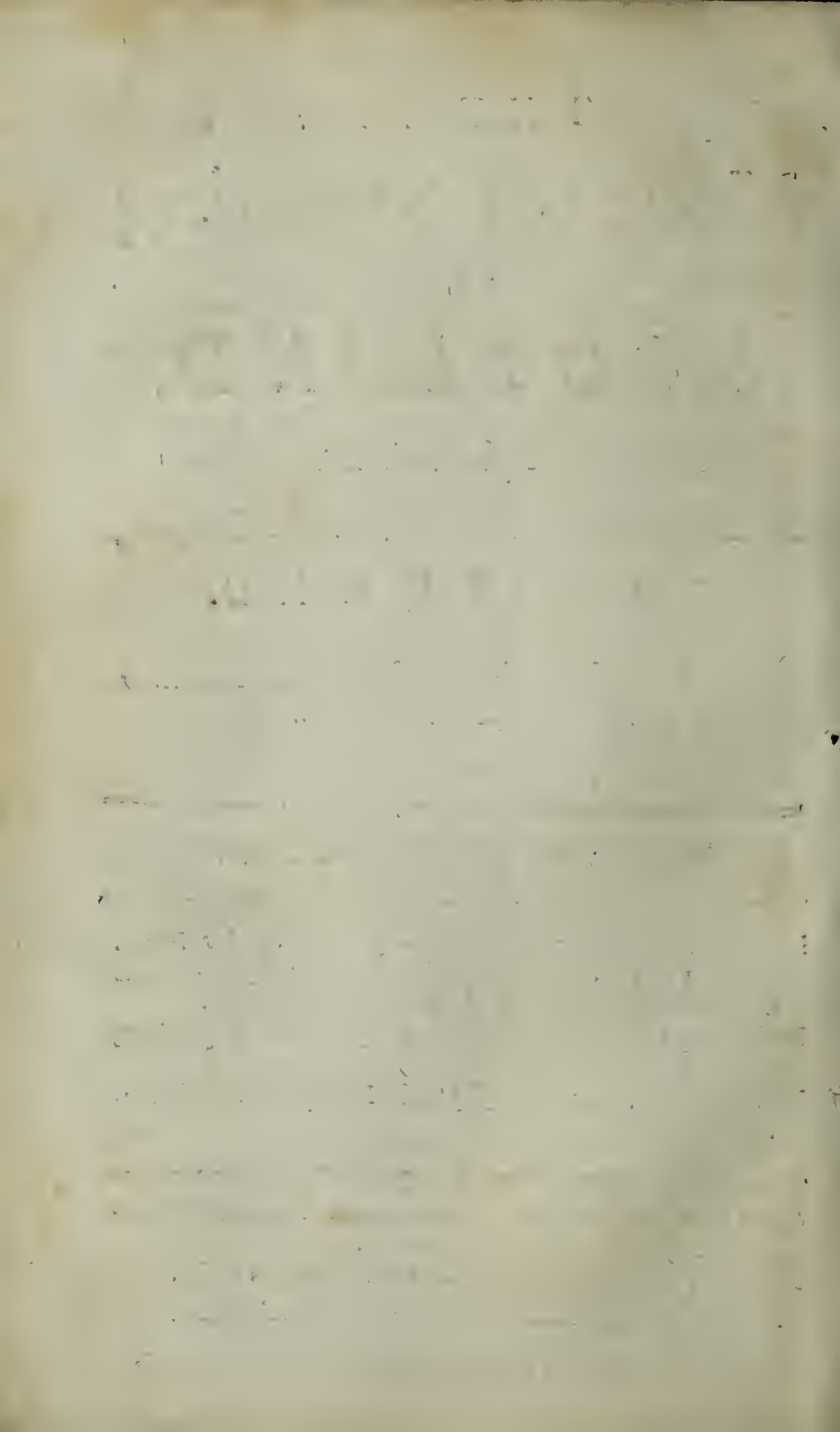
Exod. 34. 14. *For the LORD, whose Name is Jealous, is a jealous GOD.*

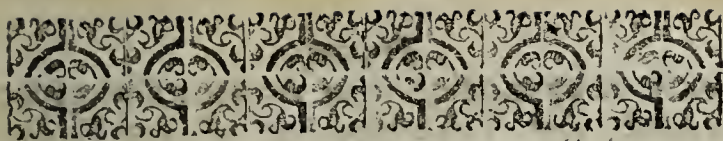
Mat. 13. 25. *While Men slept, the Enemy came and sow'd Tares.*

Signa cum ad Res divinas pertinent, Sacramenta appellantur. August. Ep: 5, ad Marcel.

Potius ab alio quam a me, potius a me quam a nullo.

Printed in the Year M D C C X I X. Price Sixpence.





P R E F A C E.

FOR a Book to appear abroad (says a *Late Author*) without Something like a Preface, is now reputed no less an Incivility, than for a Stranger to intrude into Company, without either Recommendation or Excuse: Yet as the most Handsom Excuse or Introduction, can never recommend in Conversation, if personal Merit be wanting; So if a Book can't speak for it self, the Preface might as well have been silent. 'Tis true this, since it's no Book, needed not the Civility of a Preface; yet I'm very sensible, it will need an Apology, That an obscure Person shou'd venture on a Subject, which was so proper for the Learned: And which has been so little, that I know of, cultivated before. To this Objection, which I cou'd not fail to make to my self, all the Answer I have is, That being surpriz'd with this *Novelty* in Religion (which tho' it came but very lately to the Knowledge of many, has been, as I understand since, of many Years standing among us) I bestow'd some Hours in examining It by the Scriptures, and by the Doctrine of Reform'd Divines; designing at First my own private Satisfaction only: But finding there was more of Guilt, and Dan-

Preface.

ger in it by much, than is generally apprehended; and That Nothing of this Nature was offer'd from any other Hand; and That no great Hopes, of seeing it redress'd by other Means, remain'd; I came to think it might be of some Use (if it was but to excite others of better Capacities and Opportunities, to look more narrowly into the Matter) to submit what you have here, to the Judgment of the World. In Cases of Common Danger, People do not stand upon Ceremony; But every one offers Help and Assistance the Best he can, without waiting upon others.

'Tis certain, we can't be too much aware of *Inventive Piety*, (as one calls it). since it must ever, be Equally destitute of the Divine Blessing and Acceptance, as it is of a Divine Warrant: And admit it but ever so little, That Little will be sure to draw more after it; ev'n as the Needle does its Thread. That Hideous Monster, which now goes by the Name of *Poperly*, was once as small an Embrio as this is: And cou'd Antiquity be throwly searcht, it wou'd perhaps be found, That this (of *Touching* at least) was among the first visible Lineaments of it. But however, That may have been, I'm still of the Mind, after all I have thought and heard on the Head, That if we can digest This, we can't in Reason scruple any other of the Produce of that Country it came from.

Preface.

Faln Man is naturally fond of a visible Object in Worship: And if Satan was on a Design to bring Protestants, who have renounc'd Images, back to this Way of it; what Objects cou'd be less suspected and fitter for his Purpose, to be slipt in betwixt GOD and the Worshipper (to receive less or more of the Worship; And what ever falls to be the Creature's Share in this Case, he looks on't, as so much clear Gain to him self) than the *Elements* in the LORD's Supper, and the *Bible* in swearing of an Oath? And to prevent or remove Scruples, he has been wont to teach People to salve the Matter with Distinctions: For providing the Creature be there, as an Object having State in the Worship, he's content they call it by any Name they please †. But not to detain the Reader.

Two Things, he'll readily think, are here insisted on more than needed, *namely*, the *Covenants* and *Scandal*. But as to the Former,

† *Objectum quod, per quod, propter quod, or only Objectum a quo significative.*

It can't be thought strange, that one who considers, That *Scotland's* Reformation was begun, maintain'd, and thro' all the Periods of this Church, but since the *Revolution*, carri'd on in the Way of Solemn Covenanting (which Way was ever attended and follow'd with uncontested Evidences of the Divine Approbation and Blessing.) and who believes, That the multipli'd Violations of these Covenants, both

Preface.

of Old and of Late, are among the chief Causes of the LORD's Wrath and our Miseries; as also, That the solid Peace, Prosperity and Happiness of both Church and Nation ly bur'd with 'em; It can't be thought strange, I say. That one who has such Views and Sentiments, with Respect to the *Covenants*, shou'd, as he pass'es that Way, stop a little at their Grave, to bemoan their untimely Fall by unnatural Hands, and to wish 'em a Timeous and a Joytul Resurrection. And since the Doctrine of *Scandal*, tho' one of the Old proven Weapons against other Religious Ceremonies of Humane Invention, was much worn out of Ken; I thought it wou'd be no Disservice to That Truth it self, nor to the Common Interest of Religion neither, to revive it, and improve It against This also: Which consid'ring the Nature of the Subject, cou'd not, to any Purpose, be done in less Room: Since to have done it Justice, This whole Paper wou'd scarce have been enough. 'Tis a Point of Divinity; which will take some Tho'ts; But, being of such constant and necessary Use in our Christian Walk, it richly deserves 'em. The Argument from Scandal serves to show the Inconsistency of a Practice, with the Good of our Neighbour; as others do show its Inconsistency with the Glory of GOD, more directly. I have endeavour'd to set it in full Force against this Practice, as it us'd to be set against other Ceremonies, that were Rigo-
roally

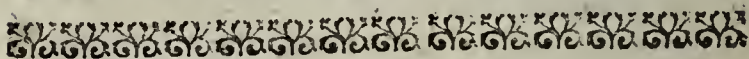
Preface.

rously impos'd: Because, tho' that be not the Case as yet, That which has been may be. And in doing of this, I've made no Step (nor in the Doctrine of the other Reasons neither) aside from the Footsteps of the most Renown'd Divines of the Reformation, that are gone before. For the Reader's Ease I have thrown much of it, into the Margin; that so he may pass it, in Case he wear's.

The Reader will easily see, That most of the Reasons here adduc'd against this Usage, may with equal Advantage be improv'd against other Ceremonies of the like Import and Extract. And how far, what is advanc'd on the Head of *Idolatry*, will go against *Kneeling* before, and in the Act of receiving, the consecrated Elements, I leave to the more learn'd and Judicious to consider of it.

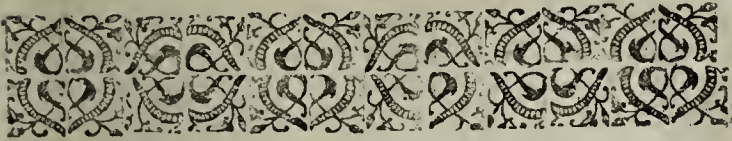
I make no Apology, for the Rud'ness and Meanness of the Performance, which yet I'm not insensible of: For every one who writes, does it, no Doubt, as well as he can at the Time; and if he fails in his Performance, the best Excuses he can alledge, will obtain him but little Mercy at the Reader's Hands.

'Twill perhaps be imagin'd, if not said, This is some Party Paper or other. But if they'll take one's Word on't, who can best tell; I assure 'em, 'tis not so: But the Result, I hope, of a conscientious Concern for the Interest of Religion, & the Purity of *Scotland's* Reformation; which shall, I hope, make the Author very easie, say or believe otherwise who will: Since 'tis the Divine Acceptance of, and Blessing upon the lame and defective Performance, which he desires to be most concern'd about, and ambitious of.



The Contents.

The Introduction,	Page 10
W Here the <i>Scriptural Gesture in Swearing</i> is established: Some Account given of the <i>Idolatrous Kiss</i> ; of <i>Touching</i> and <i>Kissing</i> of the <i>Book</i> ; and of other Gestures in Swearing, that have been in Use among Christians.	
Reason First,	Pag: 14.
From <i>Christian Liberty</i> .	
Reason Second,	Pag: 15.
From <i>Superstition</i> .	
Reason Third,	Pag: 19.
From <i>Symbolizing with Idolaters</i> .	
Reason Fourth,	Pag: 22.
From <i>Idolatry</i> : Where several Distinctions, and Six Arguments.	
Reason Fifth,	Pag: 36.
From the <i>Covenants</i> .	
Reason Sixth,	Pag: 41.
From <i>Scandal</i> : Where the chief Pleas of Formalists on this Head are answer'd.	
Objections answer'd,	Pag: 59.
Conclusion,	Pag: 67.



THE NEW
Mode of Swearing

IN

SCOTLAND,

(*Tactis et deosculatis Evangeliiis*)

Consider'd.

INTRODUCTION.



H O S O considers the Zeal, our *Holy Jealous GOD* hath to his own Worship, and, That Divine Institution is the great Characteristick, by which true Worship is distinguish'd from that which is false, cannot but own, That our LORD's Question, concerning *Cesar's Coin* Matth: 22. 20. *Whose is*

this Image and Superscription? doth claim the first Place in one's Enquiry, about any Peice of Worship offer'd

offer'd to GOD. And this is the more necessary a Question, That in all Ages, Satan has endeavour'd, by Means of Men of corrupt Minds, to palm upon the Church, Inventions of Men in the Worship of GOD, instead of Divine Institutions, to the defiling and disfiguring of the holy Ordinances of GOD; and That, the More divine and awful an Ordinance is, the more ambitious is the God of this World, to have his own Image stamp'd upon some Part of it.

That *Swearing in Judgment* is one of the most *Solemn* and *Awful* Pieces of *immediate Worship*, has been own'd by all *civiliz'd Nations*; how much soever they have differ'd one from another, in the *Manner* of it's Performance. And that such who wanted the *written Word*, did so differ, is not to be thought strange,; since, in walking after their own *Imaginations*, they cou'd not fail to *wax vain*, and become *Fools* in their Management of *this*, as well as of other Pieces of Divine Worship.

The *Grecians* in giving of their *great Oath*, laid their *Hand* upon the *Altar*; sacrificing a *Boar*, a *Ram*, or a *Goat* to the *God* by whom they swore: But in more private Cases, the Swearer laid only *his Hand*, on the *Hand* of the *Party* to whom the Oath was given. Yet their *Gods* are represented by the *Poets*, as *lifting up the Hand* in swearing.

The *Romans* swore by *Jupiter* or *Mars*, with a *Flint-Stone* in their *Hand*, uttering these Words, when they threw the Stone, *May I perish and fall as now this Stone does, in Case of Perfidy*: And sometimes a *Hog*, bro't there of Purpose, was *stricken* or *slain*, these Words, being added, *May Jove strike me, as I now do this Hog, if &c.* Whoso wou'd know more of the various Rites us'd by the *old Heathens* in this Piece of Worship, may consult *Alexander ab Alexandro*, and have his Curiosity gratif'd, ev'n unto Loathing.

But looking into the *Church of GOD*, we find the most *ancient*, and the *approven Gesture* of Swearing to be, *by lifting up of the Hand* towards Heaven: As is plain

plain from *Exod: 6. 8.* *And I will bring you into the Land, saith the LORD, concerning the which I did swear (Heb. did lift up my Hand, as may be seen in the Margin) to give it to Abraham, &c. Deut: 32. 40. For I lift up my Hand to Heaven, and say, I live for ever. Neh: 9. 15. Which thou hadst sworn (Heb. lifted up thine Hand) to give them. Ezek: 20. 7. In the Day when I chose Israel, and lifted up mine Hand to the Seed of the House of Jacob, &c.* Which Phrase of lifting up the Hand, is found no less than *Seven-times* in that Chapter. See also *Chap: 36. 7. & 47. 14.* The *ANGEL* also, *Dan: 12. 7. Held up his right Hand unto Heaven and swore, &c.* And *He* who stood upon the Earth and the Sea, *Rev: 10. 6. Lifted up his Hand to Heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, &c.* And that *MEN* did so too, is clear from *Gen: 14. 22, 23. I have lifted up my Hand to the LORD, the most high GOD, That I will not take from thee, &c.* says *Abraham* to the King of Sodom. *Isa: 3. 7. In that Day shall he swear (Heb: lift up the Hand) saying, I will not be a Healer, &c.*

Hence it's evident, That for this Mode of Swearing with the *Hand lifted up*, we have the Example of *GOD*; *Angels* and *Men* recorded in *Scripture*, our only Rule of Worship. And I see not how any *Protestant* (especially such who own the Obligation of *Scripture Precedent* and *Example*, with Respect to the *Table Gesture* in the *LORD's Supper*, and the *LORD's-Day Sabbath*) can refuse, That such a *Concurrence*, and *Harmony* of *Example* in all Ages of the Church, amounts to a *Rule*, and is equivalent to a *Divine Institution*.

Yet we don't pretend, This is the only Gesture of Swearing, to be found on sacred Record: For sometimes the *Hand* was put *under the Thigh* of him to whom the Oath was given. This *Abraham* requir'd of his Servant *Eliezer*, *Gen: 24. 2.* and *Jacob*, of his Son *Joseph*. But I find *Divines* are generally agreed, It was in Token of *Homage* and *Sujection*; intimating an *Acknowledgment* of that Person's *Authority* to impose

an *Oath* upon 'em; and that as their *Hand* was under his *Thigh*, so they were under his *Power*, and bound to obey his *Command*. Others have thought, It was to signify their *Faith* of the promis'd *Seed*, then to come out of *Abraham* and *Jacob's* Loins. 'Tis also the Opinion of some, That this Rite, whatever was the Meaning of it, was *previous* to, and distinct from the *Oath*; wherein the common and ordinary Gesture of lifting up the *Hand* was used notwithstanding: And who so duly considers, *Gen: 47. 29, --- 31.* may see some Ground for such a Cojecture.

But, however these Things may have been, 'tis certain (since the *Oath* in both Cases was *private*, the *Occasion particular*, the Persons requiring it *divinely inspired*, and under an immediate Direction) it can never be infer'd therefrom, That it's *arbitrary* to us, what Manner of *external Rite* we our selves use, or require others to use, in this *Peice of Worship*. The most that can be made of it, is, That this Gesture is not *unlawful*, in a *private Oath*, from an *Inferior* to a *Superior* (and may we not add) upon his *Death-bed*: For that was the Case in both Instances we have on Record. 'Tis not to be imagin'd, if the Occasion and Import of it had not been very particular, that ever *Abraham* wou'd have call'd his *Servant* to swear after another Manner than he was wont to do himself. Now that *Abraham* lifted up his *Hand*, when he swore, was before observed.

'Tis in vain for any to alledge, 1 *Chron: 29 24.* As a third Instance of putting the *Hand* under the *Thigh*, because 'tis there said, *The Princes ---- gave the Hand under Solomon the King*: Which is render'd in our Bibles, ---- *Submitted themselves to Solomon the King*. For one may easily see, that, *Giving* the *Hand* is different, both in *Phrase* and *Sense*, from *Putting* the *Hand* under the *Thigh*. 'Tis evident from the *Custom of Nations*, ev'n unto this Day, as well as from *Scripture*, That *Giving* of the *Hand* is a *Covenanting* Gesture or *Rite*. (For who, but he knows, that when Men *strike Hands*

Hands, they're agreed; 'tis a Bargain?) See 2 Chron: 30. 8. *Now be not stiff-necked as your Fathers, but yield your selves (Heb: give the Hand) unto the LORD.* Ezek: 17. 18. ----- *Breaking the Covenant, when lo he had given his Hand.* ----- *Est Gestus dedentium se, et quasi vincendas Manus præbentium,* says Cocc: in *Vocæ Nathan.* They gave the Hand under Solomon, that is, as Inferiors and Subjects they covenanted Subjection to him as their King. The *LXX* also render it, *They submitted themselves to Solomon.*

'Tis true this Practice of putting the Hand under the Thigh in taking of an Oath, is said to be still in Use, with some of the *Eastern Nations.* And what then? So is *Circumcision* too with others. But as lifting up of the Hand, seems in its self to be, the most *expressive* of the Nature of an Oath; so 'tis abundantly evident, I think, from what is said, That 'tis to us the clearest *Pattern* of a *Swearing Posture*, to be found on *Scripture Record.*

Lifting up of the Hands in Worship, particularly in *Praying, Blessing* and *Swearing*, seems to be one of *Nature's Institutions*; and taught in her *School* as significant not only of *Reverence*, but *Faith, Fervency, Dependence* and *Expectation* from above: Hence *Diffidence* and *Dispondency* are express'd by the *hanging down* of the Hands. The learned *Heidegger* says, *Lifting up of the Hand in swearing imports the Soul's Elevation towards Heaven, and Appeal to him who is the Searcher of Hearts, the Witness of Truth, and the Avenger of Perjury.* And tho' I will not offer any *Conjectures* of mine, on the Reason and Import of lifting up of one Hand only in *Swearing* (from which yet there is one Exception *Dan: 12. 7.* where 'tis said, *The Angel held up his Right Hand and his Left to Heaven, and swore,* &c.) Whereas both are lifted up in *Praying* and *Blessing*; I'm satisfi'd that as *Nature*, or rather the *GCD* of *Nature*, does Nothing in vain; so he teaches Nothing in vain, neither.

Having now found and establish'd the *Scriptural Gesture*

sture in taking of an Oath, let us, in the next Place, see how far we can trace this *unscriptural Custom* of laying the *Hand upon*, and *kissing some solemn Thing*, when one is swearing.

The *Primitive Christians* soon began to take a Latitude in this, as well as in other Ordinances: And that not in the *external Rites* only; but also in the more *substantial Concernments* of an Oath. For in the 3d. and 4th. Centuries, we have 'em swearing by the *Sacraments*, *Baptism* and the *LORD's Supper*: As some Nations, in their ordinary Conversation, still do. So did *Novatus*, for Instance, who lived about Anno 250. See *Euseb: Hist.* 6. 35. And the *Orthodox Bishops* after they found themselves outwitted by the *Tricks* of the *Arians* in the *Armenian Council* (holden Anno 359) says *Nazianzen*, *Constatati sunt Corpus Domini, et quicquid in Ecclesia sanctum est, se Nihil Mali in sua Fide, suspicatos.* i. e. They called to witness the *LORD's Body*, and all that's *Sacred*, that they suspected no Corruption in their Faith. And *Cyril* (who flourish'd in the 5th. Century) says in his *Apology*, That *Victor* swore, *Sublatis in Cælum Manibus, per Sacramentum, Baptismum, et veneranda Christi Mysteria.* i. e. With Hands lifted up to Heaven, by the *Sacrament*, by *Baptism*, and the *venerable Mysteries* of *Christ*.

As for the *Book-Oath*, how early soever it might be in Use, I'm sure, it can't pretend to a more *venerable Antiquity*, than many other of *Antichrist's* Corruptions do. For *Rome* was not all built in one Day: And that *Mystery of Iniquity* was already working, even in the *Apostle's* Time, 2 *Thess.* 2. 7. 1 *Joh:* 4. 3. We need not search for the Rise of Swearing on the *Gospels* in particular, beyond the Time of *Pope Damasus*, towards the End of the 4th. Century, who made the *superstitious Distinction* betwixt the *Gospels* and *Epistles*; or the Time of his Successor, *Pope Anastasius*, who bro't in *Standing* at Reading of the *Gospels*, about the Beginning of the 5th. Century.

The Account of this, which we meet with in *Justin. Novel: 124. Cap. 1.* If it is not the first, yet it seems to be the surest and most authentick. There 'tis provided by the *Imperial Law*, That Christians should swear in Judgment, *Tangentes sacra Evangelia. i. e. Touching the holy Gossels:* With this Clause at the End of their Oath, *Ita me DEUS adjuvet, et hac sancta Evangelia. i. e. So may GOD, and those holy Gossels help me.* These *Novels* were publish'd Anno 535. or thereabout.

But before this Custom of *Touching* them was introduc'd, laying their *Hand* upon their *Breast*, or lifting it up, or streaching it forth, they sware with the *Gossels open* before 'em: (which, 'tis likely, they borrow'd from the *Jews*, who, in their latter Days, were wont to swear with the *Law open* before 'em, holding a *Phylactery* in their Hand in Place of it) Afterwards they ventur'd to *Touch* them, and at length they proceeded to *Kiss* them. 'Tis not to be question'd, but these Things were at first design'd only for the greater *Solemnity* of the Worship: But hence we may learn the *Genius* and Tendency of *Superstition*, which once admitted in the least Degree, spreads like *Leaven*, or a *Leprosy*.

Corruptions in Worship oftimes creeping in unawares, 'tis hard to condescend on the precise Time, when the *Kissing-part* of the Oath was first introduc'd. But it is not thought to have been in Use, before the Time of Pope *Nicholas* the First, in the 9th. Century; who in his Answer to the *Bulgarians*, decree'd it lawful, To swear by *Creatures* set apart unto, or having Place in the Worship of GOD, *Divinis Cultibus deputatas.*

Kissing, however, in religious Worship, as *expressive* of Adoration, seems to have been as old as *false Worship* it self: For that it was a known and common *Gesture* of *Idolaters*, in their worshipping of the *Sun* and *Moon*, ev'n in those early Times when *Job* liv'd, is evident from *Job 31. 27. If I beheld the Sun, --- or the Moon, --- and my Mouth hath kissed my Hand.* And
that

that it was a Piece of *Baal's* Worship, appears from *1 Kings* 19. 18. --- *And every Mouth which hath not kissed him.* 'Twas a Part also of the *Calf-Worship*, *Hos:* 13. 2. *They say --- Let the Men that sacrifice kiss the Calves.* And the *Jewish Doctors* tell us, That they who offer'd their Children to *Molech*, were to kiss the Idol.

That Kissing, when 'tis situate in religious Worship, is expressive of Adoration, appears likewise from *Psal:* 2. 12. *Kiss ye the Son,* &c. And by the Way, some do gather from this Expression, tho' metaphorical, That kissing being a natural Expression of Adoration, if the Object of divine Worship was manifested, so as to be accessible after that Manner; (as when the glorious SON of GOD appear'd on Earth tabernacling in our Nature, as the Word, *Job:* 1. 14 imports. See *Luk:* 7. 28, 45.) it becomes false Worship in its Application to undue Objects only. And if it be so, then *Drusius* need not to have been afraid to understand this Text of Adoration, lest the Holy Ghost shou'd be thought to allude to the Custom of Idolaters.

The learned *D. Owen* thinks, That Kissing being the most simple and plain Way of Adoration, by it the Error of Man's Heart in the Point of Worship, first discover'd it self: And tho' Abundance of other religious Ceremonies, and superstitious Practices, were afterwards gradually introduc'd, this of Kissing never went out of Fashion. *In ea primum se expressit Cordis Error; alia Religionis Cereemonia, sensim introducta --- Aucta in immensum Superstitione, duravit tamen per omnia antiqua Ignorantia Secula simplex illa Adoratio Theologum. Lib. 3. Cap. 4. §. 2.* So 'tis evident, That hitherto it has been still in Use, in all Ages, and among all Nations, as a Piece of that religious Worship, they pay'd their Idols and false Gods. And what a large Room it has in the *Antichristian Worship*; we'll have Occasion to discourse afterwards.

How Ancient also and considerable this Way of Worship was among the *Romans*, might be shown from the

the Etimology of the Words, *Oro*, to pray ; and *Adoro*, to worship ; which, in the Judgment of the best *Criticks* and *Lexicographers*, are deriv'd from *Os Oris*, the Mouth : *Adorare* being as much with 'em, as *Ori admove*ri i. e. To put (the Hand viz.) to one's Mouth. *Omnino tamen is accedo qui Verbum Oro, a Nomine Os Oris factum volunt, quia in adorando Dextram Labris seu Ori, Capite inclinato admovebant.* i. e. I'm intirely of their Mind, who derive *Oro* from *Os Oris* ; for in Worshipping they bowed their Heads, and put their right Hand to their Mouth. *Camb: Dict: on the Word Adoro.* Of the same Mind is *Holyoke*, --- *Reclius ex ad et Os, quia in adorando dextram Manum Labris seu Ori, &c.* And accordingly he says, *Adoro* signifies to worship by putting the Hand to the Mouth, or kissing the Thing worshipped ; as well as to beseech or pray. --- *Inde est quod adorare non Voce fit, sed Cestu, ut patet ex Appuleio, &c.* i. e. Adoration is not done by Word, but Gesture. See his *Diction.* on the Word : So *Littleton, Curcelleus Instit. Pag: 544. Limborch, Erasmus, Grotius, Jurieu, Hoornbeek.* Owen also in the forecited Place, defines *Adoration, Per Manus ad Os Adductionem religiosa Salutatio.* i. e. A religious Salutation by putting the Hand to the Mouth.

The same might be shown, of the Greek Word, *προσκυνέω*, to worship, which is deriv'd from *κύω*, or *κύνεω* to kiss. See *Schrev: Lexic: Luc: Dict: N. T. Leighs Crit. Sac: Jurieu: Crit: Hist: Vol. 2. Part: 4. Pag: 64 Curcel: Limborch.*

The Way and Manner of Idolaters in saluting their Gods with the Kiss, was not always the same. When their *Idols* were accessible, they kissed 'em immediately : But When they worshipped the heavenly Bodies, or when their *Idols* were set up on high, in the most sacred Place of their Temples, above the Altars ; and so were inaccessible to Vulgar Worshippers ; they stretched forth the Right Hand, and bringing it back to their Mouth, kiss'd it before, and in Honour of 'em : Which is reckon'd to 've been the most ancient Way of Ado-

ring. *In Deorum enim Salutatione eminus stantes, Manum porrigebant, eamque statim ad Os suum relatum suaviabantur,* says *Curcell:* in the fore-cited Place. And *Minutius Felix* in his *Octavius* tells us, That *Cacilius* espying the Image of *Serapis*, *Manum Ori admovens Osculum Labiis pressit.* i. e. He put his Hand to his Mouth, and smack'd it.

Afterwards they got into a Custom of *Wheeling* about their Bodies, when they kiss'd their Hand: *In adorando Dextram ad Osculum referimus, totumque Corpus circumagimus;* *Plin: Lib: 28. Cap: 2.* which *Plutarch* tells us, was one of *Numa's* Institutions. The Import of it, according to some, was to denote that Circle or *Orbit*, which the *Sun*, their chief Idol, describ'd in his Motion: But *Owen* thinks, That since this Custom was introduc'd after the building of *Temples*, which always fronting towards the *East*, oblig'd the Idolaters to worship their Idols, and bow towards the *West*; they *wheel'd* about their *Bodies* towards the *East* or *Sun-Rising*; to intimate, That unto the *Sun* their Worship was ultimately directed. Some again drew only their Lips into the *Form* of a Kiss: While others, after they had kissed their Hand, *threw the Kisses* towards the Idol.

Whether by this *Kiss*, as some think, the Idolater acknowledg'd his having, and holding *Life* and *Breath* from those their *Idol Gods*, I shall not determine. But Divines generally agree, That the religious *Kiss* is significant of *superlative Love*; *Reverence* and *Subjection*.

'Twas with this Sort of *Kiss*, *Caligula*, *Dioclesian* and *Maximinus Junior*, ambitious of Divinity, wou'd have their *Feet* kiss'd: And after them the *Roman Antichrist* copies. For tho' People generally take the *Kissing* of the *Pope's Feet*, to be no more than a *Civil Compliment* to the *vile Beast*; 'twas originally intended, and is still taken for *religious Adoration*; as is evident from *Lib.: Cerem: Sect: 3. Cap: 3.* Where 'tis ordain'd, *Quod omnes Mortales cujuscunque sint Dignitatis et Præminentia, cum primum in Conspectum Pontificis*

ficis veniunt, ter debeant ante illum Genua flectere, et Pedes ejus osculari, in Honorem Jesu, cujus Vices gerit: i. e. *That all Mortals whatever be their Dignity or Preheminence, when first they come into the Pope's Presence, bow the Knee thrice before him, and kiss his Feet in Honour of JESUS, whose Vice-gerent he is.* But, as one says, How wou'd that *Mystical Beast* take it, to have the Honour he reckons due to himself, thus transferr'd to him thro' the Person of his own *Legate*? This serves for a Piece of a *Commentary* on that Text, 2 *Theff.* 2. 4. *He exalts himself above all that is called God, or is worshipped: And as God he sits in the Temple of GOD, shewing himself that he is GOD.*

But that *Kiss* which *Samuel* saluted *Saul* with, 1 *Sam.* 10. 1. after he had anointed him *King*, was in *Token* of *Honour* and *Subjection*: Is it not, says he, because the *LORD* hath anointed thee *Captain* over his *Inheritance*? Thus we find, in *Plutarch*, the *Souldiers* kissing *Cato's* Hands; and in *Justin*, *Alexander's* *Souldiers* kissing his *Right Hand*, when he lay adying: And with us still, the *King's* *Hand* is kiss'd in *Token* of *Subjection* and *Dependance*, as well as of *Affection*.

I make no Doubt, but if one skil'd in *critical* and *ancient Learning*, was handling this Subject, he might take *Occasion* to oblige the *World* with many *curious* and *entertaining Things*, anent the alledg'd *Difference* between *Bosum*, *Osculum* and *Suavium*; the different *Import* of kissing the *Mouth*, the *Hand*, the *Knees* and the *Feet*; kissing the *Pavement*, the *Purple*, and other *Ensigns* of *Royal Majesty* among the *Romans*; the several *Sorts* of *Kisses* that have been, or are in *Use* among *Men*, as the *Kiss* of *Urbanity*, of *Propinquity*, of *Reconciliation*, of *Charity*; the *Lascivious* and the *Treacherous Kisses*, the *Kiss* of *Honour*, and ev'n anent the *Idolatrous Kiss*, besides the few *Hints* that are offer'd here: But leaving *these* to the *Curious*, and such as have *Time* and *Opportunity* for 'em, my *Design* is, by the *Help* of *Scripture Light*, only to enquire into, and as it appears to me, lay open the *Guilt* and *Danger*

of this *Innovation* in the Worship of GOD, which is crept in upon us unawares.

That *new Mode* of Swearing, I mean, which is got into some *Courts* and other Places where Men are call'd to give their Oath, in *this Nation*: Where the Swearer is requir'd to lay and hold his *Hand* on the *open Bible*, particularly the *Gospels*, or at least the *New Testament*, while the *Oath* is a reading to him; and then he is required to *kiss the Book*, when the Reading is over. And this is his *Oath*: So that both his *Promise* to declare the Truth, and his *Appeal to GOD* as *Witness* and *Avenger*, are made by the *Gestures* of *touching* and *kissing* of the Book: For he's not requir'd by the *Law* or *Custom of England* (by which this comes to have Place here) to utter the *Words* of his *Oath*, tho' perhaps he may be allow'd to do it, if he has a Mind: Nor is there any *Appeal to GOD* in the *Words* of the *Oath*; as will be observed afterwards. Which Corruption has till of *late Years* been a *Stranger* in this *Church*, since the Days of her *Reformation* from *Popery*: When it with the rest of the *Whorish Gestures, Trinkets* and *Attire* were thrown forth, never to be reciev'd in again.

'Tis confess'd, That besides this, there have been or are in Use among Christians, several *other Gestures* in taking of an Oath; such as holding up of *Three Fingers*, namely the *Thumb*, the *First*, and the *Middle* ones, in Token of their *Belief* and *Confession* of the *glorious Trinity*: Others hold up *Two* only, with an Eye to the *Two* distinct *Natures* in the Person of *Christ*: Both which Customs are still in Use with some *Countries abroad*. Others have been in Use to swear on their *Knees*, in Token of *Invocation*; and some swore with their *Hand* upon their *Breast*, in Testimony of a *good Conscience*. All which let us see, That when once Men have left the *Word* as their *Rule*, there's no more *sure Floating* for 'em. If Man's *Invention* once gives it self the *Loose*, in the Matters of GOD, it scarce ever has done; and by affecting to be *wise* above what

is written, We quickly show our selves *Fools*. But tho' all of *these* be near a Kin to *Will-worship*; yet, I humbly conceive; none of 'em is of such dangerous Consequence, as *this* under Consideration: For in the first *two* of 'em, the Scriptural Gesture of *holding up the Hand* is still retain'd; tho' with some very *unnecessary* and officious *Improvements* on it. And the rest are Gestures *sutable* enough in *other* Parts of Divine Worship, tho' not so *proper* in *this*.

The Reverend and Ingenuous Mr. *Mather* in his History of *New England*, informs us, That that *Church* suffer'd Persecution in the Reign of K. *James 7th.* for their *Nonconformity* to the Law in this Point: That *Atbanasius* (in the *4th. Century*) wou'd use *no Rite* in swearing, but that of *Lifting up the Hand*; and that *Chrystom* (who died not till after the Beginning of the *5th. Century*) was against any *Book Oath*; tho', the Kissing of the Book was not then introduc'd: That *Pareus*, *Rivet* and *Voetius*, these learned *Professors of Divinity*, condemn'd it as unlawful: That D. *Goodwin* and Mr. *Philip Nye* (the *last* of whom was one of the *Commissioners* from the *Westminster Assembly*, to the *General Assembly* of this *Church*, in the Year *1643*, when the *Solemn League* was made) reckon'd, it the *worst* of all the *English Ceremonies*.

Mr. *Burroughs* was of the same Mind: And what D. *Own's* Sentiments of it were, may be gather'd from what he has said upon *Adoration* by *Kissing*. These Things, 'tis hop'd, may procure an unprejudic'd Hearing, and an impartial Consideration of the *Reasons* here offer'd against this *Practice*: Which are as follows.

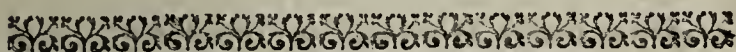
R E A S O N F I R S T.

TO require one to swear after this Manner, is, 'tis humbly conceiv'd, *A manifest Invection on Christian Liberty*; and to do it, being required, is, *An evident, but a most unwarrantable Surrender of it.* Freedom from *Doctrines and Commandments of Men*, in Matters of *Faith or Worship*, is a most valuable Branch of our Christian Liberty: For there is *one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy*, Jam: 4. 12. *Why then are ye subject to Ordinances, after the Commandments and Doctrines of Men*, Coloss: 2. 20, 22. *Ye are bought with a Price, be not ye the Servants of Men*, 1 Cor: 7. 23. Namely, in these Things, wherein you are the LORD's free Men. Ver: 22. *Stand fast therefore in the Liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not again intangled*, --- Gal: 5: 1.

^a Things of an indifferent Nature, in the Worship of GOD, can never be just Matter of humane Determination: Since what is indifferent as to Practice, in one Case, may by Reason of new Circumstances, become utterly unlawful in another. Far less can any Authority on Earth, institute and enjoin *new significant Ceremonies* in the Worship of GOD: Such as the Religious *Touching and Kissing of a Book*, in taking of an *Oath*, certainly are. By what Right can any Power on Earth, require us to do these Things in Divine Worship, concerning which the LORD has not given us the least Notice of his Approbation, in his Word? Does not it afford us a perfect Platform, both of Ordinances, and of the Manner of their Performance? Are the Scriptures an insufficient Rule, or are the Ordinances of GOD imperfect, and to be improv'd by Man's Additions?

Where has JESUS CHRIST clothed Governors either

ther in Church or State, with a Power to enact new Pieces of *external Worship*: If Men may institute *Symbolical Rites*, doubtless they may appoint *Symbolical Things* too. But is it to be imagin'd, GOD wou'd break the Yoke of his own Ceremonial Law, that Men might make a new one, to gall the Necks and Consciences of the Disciples? Since our LORD justified his Disciples in their Nonconformity to such a seemingly innocent Ceremony, as the *Washing of Hands* before Meat, *Matth: 15.* (because impos'd, and that somewhat of Religion was plac'd in it, tho' it was not annex'd to any Ordinance of Worship) Doubtless, a conscientious Noncompliance with such an Imposition and Addition to his Worship, as *this* is, will be approv'd of him; tho' accounted of Men, despicable Weakness.



REASON SECOND.

IT is, I humbly conceive, a *superstitious Way of Swearing*: And if so, none but will own, it's unwarrantable. Now that it is a Piece of Superstition, seems evident: For,

1st. Here is offer'd unto GOD, *A Piece of external Worship, of Man's devising*. Here is an Act of Worship express'd and perform'd, by an *uninstituted*, and in Scripture, our only Rule of Worship, *unprecedented Means*: Which therefore must be *Will-Worship*; and this our LORD has told us, *Matth: 15. 9.* is *vain Worship*. That Command which forbids us to make unto our selves an *Image* or the *Likeness* of any Thing for Religious Use; forbids us also, to forge *Rites* or *Gestures of Worship* out of our own Brain. It appears like a Piece of *voluntary Humility*, which, in Religion, is dangerous, and in some Cases damnable; *Col: 2. 18.*

2dly. Swearing with the Hand on the *Gostels*, is grounded upon; and deriv'd from the *Popish Opinion* of the *Gostels* their being more *Divine*; and therefore more to be reverenc'd than other Scriptures: Hence in the Church of *Rome*, and That of *England*, they must stand when the *Gostels* are read; whereas they may sit at the reading of the *Epistles*. But sure, this is a making of a Difference, which GOD has not made; and a laying of Weight where the LORD has laid no Weight; which in Matters of Religion is Superstition. What Divine Warrant is there for this Opinion; or the Practice founded thereupon? *All Scripture is given by Inspiration of GOD*, 2 *Tim*: 3. 16. And in Respect of *Inspiration* (which is the *Formal Ground*; rendring the whole Word Divine and Sacred) no considering Person, can refuse the Doctrinal and Prophetical Books to be fully as Sacred as the Historical ones are.

3dly. All the *Characters* of *superstitious Ceremonies* agree unto these; as 1st. They're of *Humane Invention* and Institution. 2dly. They're of *ordain'd Signification* (for tho' the real and true Signification of *Kissing* in Worship be Natural, as we'll see afterwards; yet their Sense of it in Swearing is *ordain'd*) whereby they're distinguish'd from Ceremonies of natural Signification. 3dly. They're of *Mystical Signification*, being used to express Religion and declare spiritual Things, and may be called Moral Ceremonies. 4thly. They're *appropriated unto Religion*, and to this Ordinance of Worship in particular; and so are religious Ceremonies: Whereby they're distinguish'd from meer circumstantial Ceremonies of *Decency* and *Order*; which are common to Things Sacred and Civil, and are us'd out of GOD's Service, as well as in it. Now these are what Reformed Divines give as Characters of the Ceremonies, in the Church of *Rome* and *England*, whose proper Name is *Superstitions*: And if laying the *Hand* upon and *Kissing* of the *Book*, in the Case under Consideration, are not of the Number, the Reader is left to be Judge. *Nec absque Superstitione;*
cum

cum super Crucifixum aut Coacem Evangelii Digiti impositis juratur; ut fit in *Papatu*, says the learn'd *Pareus* on *Gen: 24. 2.* Where we see he puts *Touching* of the *Gospels* on the same Foot with *Touching* of a *Crucifix*, a Point of *Superstition*; and indeed they being equally without Warrant, both must be unacceptable.

4thly. I wou'd gladly know how any one will be able to *justifie* his *condemning* of *Crossing* in *Baptism*, *Kneeing* before the consecrated Elements, *Standing* at the *Gospels*, *Bowing* at the Name *Jesus*, &c. on the Account of *Superstition*: If at the same Time he absolves this Usage of *Touching* and *Kissing* the Book in *Swearing*, from all such *Guilt* and *Defilement*. The learn'd *Dr. Sanderson*, I find, reckon'd this beyond his *Comprehension*: For he tells us, That tho' he had often and seriously thought with himself, and inquired of at others, yet cou'd he never come at a *satisfying Reason*, why such *Rites* shou'd be allowable in taking of an *Oath*, and at the same Time unlawful in other Parts of publick *Worship*. --- *Cur non ista aut a Juramento ut superstitiosa Additamenta amoveri debeant, aut in reliquo DEI Cultu, ut utilia Pietatis Subsidia, retineri possint? Qui potest capere, capiat: Ego quidem non intelligo. De Juramento Praelect: 5. §. 12.* at the Close. This, as apply'd to *Touching*, *Kissing* and all other *Rites* in *Swearing*, that are of humane *Original*, seems unanswerable: Tho' with *Respect* to that of *lifting up the Hand*, the Case is quite different; since 'tis both a *Natural Ceremony* (which People are led into *quodam Naturæ ductu, i. e.* By a certain *Instinct* of Nature; as he himself seems to own in the preceding Section) and so abundantly *authoriz'd* and recommended to us from *Scripture*: Where, as our Author observes, the Phrase of *lifting up the Hand*, is frequently put for the *Act* of *Swearing* it self. But to proceed.

'Tis here worthy of our *Consideration*, That since Religious Ceremonies are *Instruments*, which the HO-

LY GHOST is to work with; they must be of his own, and not of our chusing: Such *Tools* as GOD has not singl'd out, and sanctifi'd by his own Word of *Institution*, we're not to expect his Concurrence with; nor his Blessing upon. Hence the Will-Worship of un-instituted Ceremonies, however goodly and promising like, hath been so far from proving serviceable to the Interest of Religion; that, in all Ages of the Church, it has been hurtful to it.

David's making Use of a *Cart* to carry the *Ark*, (which some take to have been the *Philistines* their new Cart, that It had been sent back upon, a long Time before) seems to have been one of the chief Causes of the LORD's Anger, when he smote *Uzzah*, *1 Chron;* 13. 7. And therefore when they sought the LORD after the *due Order*, they threw away the Cart, and carry'd the *Ark* by the *Staves* thereof, on the *Shoulders* of the Levites, according to the Word of the LORD, as *Moses* had commanded 'em, *Chap: 15. 13, --- 15.* And one wou'd think these Ceremonies of *laying the Hand*; &c. to be not unlike to a *new Cart*, for this Part of GOD's Worship; which ought to be otherwise born up and convey'd.

'Tis an old Principle with us, That all religious Worship, which GOD has not commanded, is *forbidden*; and that *significant Ceremonies*, introduc'd by Men into the Worship of GOD, are *Parts* of the Worship. But of them he does, and will say, *Who hath required these Things at your Hands, I commanded 'em not, neither came it into my Mind.*

The *Stones* of GOD's Altar must not be polished by Man's Skill; tho' the doing of it wou'd make 'em much more sightly. Remarkable, to this Purpose, is that Text, *Exod, 20. 25. --- For if thou lift up thy Tool upon it, thou hast polluted it.*

REASON THIRD.

THis Way of Swearing, can't be deny'd, is a *Symbolizing with Idolaters in the religious Rites of their own Devising*: Which Reformed Divines have hitherto taken for a good Argument, against un-instituted Ceremonies. Because the LORD has most expressly and peremptorily forbidden all such *Symbolizing*; both in the *Old and New Testament*, *Deut: 12. 30, 31. Take Heed unto thy self, --- That thou enquire not after their Gods, saying, How did these Nations serve their Gods? even so will I do likeways. Thou shalt not do so unto the LORD thy GOD. 2 Cor: 6. 15, --- 17. What Communion hath Light with Darknes? What Concord hath Christ with Belial? What Agreement hath the Temple of GOD with Idols? Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the LORD, and touch not the unclean Thing; and I will receive you. See likewise Lev: 18. 3. Jude 23. Rev: 14. 9.*

The LORD will have his People *unlike* 'em in all Things, which they *distinguish* themselves by, and which they make *Badges* of their Religion. Yea, ev'n in *Words and Gestures*, his People must be *unlike* 'em: If Idolaters worship towards the *East*, *Israel* must worship towards the *West*, *Ezek: 8. 16.* And they must not call him *Baali*, *Hof: 2. 16.* (tho' a Name of good and proper Signification, and which the LORD had taken to himself before) after that Name had been defil'd by an *Emphatical Use* in an *Idolatrous Service*.

Now that in these Rites of Swearing, we *symbolize* with *Idolatrous Papists*, is evident; in that, They were deriv'd from 'em, and are still in Use among 'em. This Mode of swearing is one of the *Relicts* of their false Worship; which has never been purg'd out of some

Protestant Churches: Tho' I nev'r hear'd of any who receiv'd it in again, after it had been once abandon'd. Who does not know, That *Religious Kissing* runs thro' the whole of the *Popish Worship*? They lay the Hand upon and kiss the *Book*, and sometimes the *Relicks* of Martyrs, in Swearing: They kiss *Crucifixes, Images, Altars*, and especially they kiss the *Gospels*. That this last is a very solemn and nice Piece of the *Mass* Worshipp, one may satisfie himself, by looking in to the *Ordo Celebrationis*, at the Beginning of the *Roman Missal*: --- *Celebrans osculatur Evangelium per eum Dictum in ejus Principio: Nisi celebret pro Defunctis, --- vel coram summo Pontifice, aut Cardinali, Patriarcha, Archiepiscopo vel Episcopo, cui Liber et Textus Evangelii portatur per eum osculandus, &c. i. e.*

He who says *Mass*, after he has read the Gospel, must kiss it, at the Place where he began to read: Except he says *Mass* for the Dead, or before the Pope, a Cardinal, Patriarch, Archbishop or Bishop, to whom the *Book* and *Text* of the Gospel must be bro't to be kissed.

When People conform themselves unto *Antichrist*, and copy after him in his peculiar Rites of Worshipp; They, in so far, have *Communion* with him; and put a special Honour on him and his Members; giving 'em, in some Sense the *Right Hand of Fellowship*. And shall we also, tacitely put Respect upon the *Man of Sin*, and do Honour to the *Son of Perdition*? 'Tis more, I conceive, than he expected of us. Shall we seem to over-look, or think meanly of the *Pattern* shewed in the *Mount*? Or shall we, in any Case, borrow the *Pattern* of GOD's Altar from *Rome*, as *Ahaz* did from *Damascus*? Tell it not in *Gath*, &c.

The *Relicks, Badges* and *Monuments* of Idolatry and Superstition, should be defac'd and raz'd in Detestation and Abhorrence of these Dishonours and *Indignities* have been done the LORD, by Means of 'em: And because they are *Monitory* also, preserving and embalming the Memory of the cursed Idols, and false Worshipp

ship; which ought to be bury'd in Darknes and Eternal Oblivion. They are likewise *Infectious*, and entice People back to the grosser Ills, insensibly: And therefore the LORD knowing this, and the Byas of our Natures that Way; will have the very *Prints* and *Vestiges* of 'em taken out of his Peoples Mouths and Memories: Lest a *Back-Door* shou'd be left open for the *unclean Spirit's* Re-entry.

The *Jews* might not sow their Ground with *Divers* Sorts of *Seed*, nor round their *Beards*; nor make *Prints* in their *Flesh*; Because their *Heathens* Neighbours did so: And will the LORD allow us to sprinkle diverse Sorts of *Rites* and *Ceremonies*, into his own Worship; and to disfigure it with *Modes* and *Gestures*, which have Nothing to recommend 'em to us, if it is not, That they were, or are practis'd in the *Synagogue* of *Satan*? But who so partakes with *Babylon* in her *Sins*, must also partake in her *Plagues*.

'Tis childish to alledge, That, at this Rate, we must abandon the *Scriptures*, the *Sacraments*, &c. because they have been abus'd by Idolaters. For the Command of not Symbolizing, with Idolaters, extends not to Things, that are *Necessary* in Religion, as having GOD's, or ev'n Nature's Institution: Such Things can't be so defil'd by any Abuse, as to render the Use of 'em unlawful. But this can be no Skreen to Things *not necessary*, that have been us'd in an Idolatrous or Superstitious Service.

As for the common Blind and Pretence of *Decency* and *Order*: We can't understand, how it can be decent for Men to institute *new Things* in GOD's Worship: And far less how, any shou'd learn *Order* from *Babel*, or *Decency* from the *Great Where*, the *Mother* of *Abominations* and *Harlots*.

This Reason is distinct enough from 't'other: For who knows not that a Thing may be *superstitious*, tho' therein we don't *symbolize* with Idolaters?

REASON FOURTH.

How much soever it may surprize, I can't help thinking, This Way of Swearing to be *Idol-
trous*. 'Tis indeed a heavy Charge, and needs to be well instructed. Therefore to prepare the Way, and That what I've to offer on this Head may be the more plain and convincing; I must crave Leave to distinguish these Things following.

1st. We must distinguish betwixt Kissing (and so of Kneeling, &c) in a *State of Civility*, and Kissing in a *State of Religion*. No Body, I believe, apprehends the *Holy Kiss*, wherewith Christians were wont to salute one another, to have been an Act of Religious Worship: And I think, as Few will imagin, the Kissing of *Jeroboam's Calves* or *Baal's Image*, to have been Acts of meer Civility. Religious Ceremonies have a general Nature, as they are Actions or Motions, in which Respect they are *indifferent*: And a particular Nature, as they are stated in, or annex'd to Religious Worship, and done for a spiritual Purpose; in which Case they're quite remov'd out of their former State of *Indifference*.

2^{dly} We're to distinguish betwixt an Object *accidentally* before one in an Act of Worship, and an Object set before him *of Purpose*, to have State and Place in the Worship. One can swear or pray no where, but he'll have some Creature or other before him *accidentally*: But here the Bible is before the Swearer *statedly* and of set Purpose.

3^{dly}. We distinguish betwixt Religious *Reverence*, and Religious *Adoration*. This Difference may be seen, *Neb: 2. 5, 6. When Ezra opened the Book, --- all the People stood up. And Ezra blessed the LORD the great GOD*

GOD: --- And they bowed their Heads, and worshipped the LORD with their Faces to the Ground. Moses's putting off his Shoes, *Exod: 3. 5.* was Reverence; but not Adoration. See also *Josh: 5. 15.* We own there's a *Negative Reverence* (as 'tis call'd) due to the Bible at all Times: 'Tis never to be prophan'd, put to an ignoble dishonourable Use, nor handl'd after any such rude unseemly Manner as might argue Disesteem; or look like Contempt of the Law and Will of our Sovereign LORD, therein contain'd: And a *Positive Reverence* at some Times; we're to esteem it a most valuable Blessing, to use it gravely and decently: But at no Time are we to bestow Religious Honour or Adoration on it.

'Tis true, in Reading or in Hearing the Book of the Holy Scriptures read, we uncover the *Head*: Yet not to the Book, but as a Sign of Regard to the Mind and Will of GOD; then declar'd; which ought to impress us with holy Fear and Reverence (and what can be more natural, than for one to stand up, or uncover the *Head* when he is to hear GOD speak to him?) and this we do because Uncovering of the Head is, with us, a Token of Civil Reverence; tho' of Old it was not so, and at this Day is not, with several Nations. But if one shou'd think him self oblig'd, always upon the Sight of a Bible, to take off his *Hat*; If he's in no Degree guilty of Idolatry, I believe, Reform'd Divines will say, He's fairly on the Way leading to it. Now the Word being neither read nor heard in the present Case, there can be no Occasion for so much as uncovering of the Head, or expressing any positive religious Reverence, with Reference unto it; and much less for Adoration of, or Kissing the Book religiously.

4thly. Divines have been in Use to distinguish betwixt an *Active* and a *Passive Object* of Adoration: Which indeed, tho' their Meaning was good enough, was no other than a Racking and Vexing of Words, after the Manner of the old Schoolmen. We own, That the Bible, yea Sun, Moon and all Creatures are active
Objects

Objects, in their Sense; that is, They teach, excite and stir us up to adore Him whose Glory shines in 'em: But we ought not therefore to make 'em *Passive Objects* of Adoration, that is, Direct Religious Worship to them. When one has been reading on the *Book of Nature* or *Grace*, and is taught and excited thereby to adore *JEHOVAH*; he's not to fall down before his Bible or any other Creature, with the Eyes of his Body and Mind fastn'd thereon, nor direct Religious Kissing or Bowing to it: But when the *Act* of Teaching is over and past, he's to turn from the Creature and adore the Creator. Now 'tis plain, That the Bible is here; more than an active Object of Worship; for since 'tis present and plac'd before the Depo- nent of set Purpose, and Religious Kissing directed to it: If ever Creature was a *Passive Object* of Adoration; it must be so.

Athly. 'Tis necessary to distinguish betwixt the *Gestures* or *Actions*, which have their *Signification* from *Man's meer Will*, and these that have their *Signification* from *GOD*, or *Nature's Institution*. Of the last Sort we reckon *Kneeling, Kissing, Prostration*, lifting up of the *Eyes* or *Hands*, &c. when us'd in a State of Religion. These, we say, signifie Adoration naturally and necessarily, as Weeping does Sorrow, or Laughing Gladness: And there results from 'em necessarily, an Honouring of that Object to which they are directed; abstracting from all present Intention or Free Choice of the Worshipper. Let a Man bow down religiously before, or Kiss an Idol; and 'tis not in the Power of his Will to stay the *Flux* of *Religious Honour* from that Gesture unto that Object: Because that it conveys not Honour by the Man's free Choice; but by Nature's Institution.

This of the Signification of Natural Gestures, has more in it than one is aware of, at first View: For 'tis not in the Power of Men, so to change their Signification but that, when us'd in Religion, they'll still signifie Adoration. Who can perswade himself,
That

That Man's Will, Institution or Authority could ever make *Bowing down* to, or *Kissing* of an *Idol*, an Expression of *Contempt* towards that *Idol* (for an *Ironical Use* of these supposes always the proper and genuine Meaning of 'em to be notour: As when the Souldiers bow'd the Knee before our LORD, and mocking said, *Hail King of the Jews*, *Matth: 27. 29.*) or *Lying* on our Back the most humble and *Devout* Posture of Worshipping GOD? Yea, tho' the Signification of *Words* is from Institution only, yet I doubt, if 'tis in the Power of Man, so to change their Meaning (I speak not of the accidental insensible Corruption of *Words* thro' Custom, as has been the Fate of the *Words, Tyrant, Knave, &c.*) as that one might safely say to a *Stock, Thou art my Father*: Yet, 'tis certain, Men are more *Masters of Grammar*, than they are *Lords of Gestures*; as says the Learn'd *Rutherfoord*, somewhere in his *Divine Right of Church Government*.

But let us suppose, That *Kissing* in *Worship* is not of these *Gestures*, which are naturally significant (tho' I believe, when 'tis search'd to the Bottom, 'twill be found, That all *Gestures* and *Actions*, which are naturally significant in a *State of Civility*, continue to be so, when they're ingrafted into *Religious Worship*) yet 'tis certain, It's significant of *Adoration*, by *Universal* and *Immemorial* Custom: (For the Meaning of it has been still the same in all Ages, and among all Nations: *Pagans, Jews, Papists* have us'd it, and do use it as an adoring *Gesture*. Yea, the Word *Adoration* carries a Memorial of this, as was said, in the very *Sound* of it.) Which is enough to make a *Thing* Natural in a *Secondary Sense*. In which Sense the Apostle tells us, *1 Cor: 11. 14.* That 'tis against *Nature*, for a *Man* to wear *long Hair*: Not that it was immediatly so, but by the Intervention of a Reasonable Custom; which had made that a *Badge* of Distinction betwixt the *Sexes*: Hence the *Law of Nature* dictated the Observance of it.

These being premis'd, I offer the following Arguments to evince the Charge.

Arg: I. Here is a Concurrence of all Things requisite to constitute an Act of Idolatry. As 1st. A *Worshipping Act*, or Gesture of Adoration, which is abundantly manifest from what has been said above. 2^{dly}. 'Tis *express'd* when one is professedly employ'd in *solemn Worship*, namely, when he is swearing in Judgment. 3^{dly}. 'Tis *directed to a Creature*, having a religious State and Place in the Worship, namely, to the *Bible*, purposely set before the Depo- nent in the Act of Swearing. Sure none will have the Brow to say, The Bible has no other Place here, than the Table or the Clerk's Ink-horn or Paper have. 4^{ly}. 'Tis a *voluntary, deliberate humane Act* in the Depo- nent; being done in Obedience to a Commandment. No Reform'd Divine, I hope, will alledge, That fur- ther and besides all these, the Intention of the Wor- shipper is also necessary, to constitute an Act of ex- ternal Idolatry. Had the *Three Children* (*Dan: 3.*) been of that Opinion, they might have kneel'd before the Image, when they were commanded (mean while despising the Idol in their Heart, and intending Wor- ship to JEHOVAH) and so have sav'd both their *Con- science* and their *Skin*.

Arg: II. 'Tis a doing *Religious Service* unto that which *by Nature is not GOD*. And this is It that the *Formal Nature* of Idolatry Lyes in, according to the Second Command, *Exod: 20. 7.* *Thou shalt not bow down thy self to them, nor serve them.* --- compar'd with *Gal: 4. 8.* Where the Heathen Idolatry is describ'd in these very Terms --- *Ye did Service unto them which by Nature are no Gods.* That Kissing of a Creature in Worship, is a Piece of that *Criminal Service* to It, for- bidden in the Second Command, can hardly be deni'd. For if *Kissing* of an *Idol*, be not as truly a *Service* done it, as bowing down thereto is, there can be no *Synecdoche* (a Figure whereby under one Kind, all Sorts and Degrees of the same Kind are included) in the Second Commandment: And so neither will *Sa- crificing* to the Creature, be serving of it, in the Sense of

of the Command; for That is as little forbidden in exprefs Words as Kiffing is. Nay, if the deliberate voluntary Performance of an Act of bodily Worship, not only before, but unto a Creature purposedly fet before one, to have State and Place in the Worship, I fay, If all this does not amount to *Religious Service*; 'Twill be hard to tell what that Service is, which the Command forbids. I fhall add one Thing here, tho' it belong'd properly to a former Part of this Difcourse, as worthy of Observation, namely, That as Kiffing is an Expreflion of *Religious Service* and Duty from the Worshipper; fo it imports his *Priviledge*: For of all the Acts of bodily Worship, that have hitherto been in Ufe among Men (excepting fome filthy Usages that ought not to be nam'd among Chriftians) It denotes the moft intimate and immediate *Communion* between the *Worshipper* and the *Religious Object*. I conclude this Argument with Mr. Burroughs's Words on *Hof: 13. 2.* ' 'Tis falfe Worship, foy
' he, to give Religious Refpect to any Creature, what-
' ever the Creature be, by *Kiffing* as well as by Bow-
' ing.' And he adds *ibid.* ' That he knew no Rea-
' fon, why a *Book* may not be fet up to be bow'd to,
' as well as to be *Kiffed* in taking an Oath.'

Arg: III. 'Tis a *dividing* and fharing of *Religious Worship* betwixt GOD and the *Creature*; and therefore can never be clear'd from *Idolatry*: *Isa: 42 8.* *I am Jehovah, that is my Name, and my Glory (in whole or in Part) will I not give to another.* *Matth: 4. 10.* *Thou fhalt worship the LORD thy GOD, and him only fhalt thou ferve.* *Deut; 7. 13.* --- *And fhall swear by his Name. Ye fhall not go after other Gods.* --- *Zeph: 1. 4, 5.* *I will cut off --- them --- that swear by the LORD, and that swear by Malcham. The LORD whose Name is Jealous (Exod; 34. 14.) will not be a Sharer with the Creature, in Religious Worship, or Honour: He will nev'r accept nor approve that Worship, whereof any the leaft Part is offer'd to it.*

Now that the Book which is touch'd and kiss'd in Swearing, receives a Part of the external Worship, seems undeniabie from what is said above. *Chemnitius* alio (speaking of the Papiſts their kissing the Relicks of Saints, and their swearing with the Hand laid upon 'em, which Custom among many other, they borrow'd of the Heathen) says, *Juramenta apud Pontificios sunt tactis Sanctorum Reliquiis, ut Religio Jurisjurandi, inter DEUM et Sanctos dividatur. i. e.* Oaths among the Papiſts are taken by touching the Relicks of Saints, that so the Religion of the Oath may be divided betwixt GOD and them. *Exam. Concil: Trid: Pag. 661. 671.* Whence we see, That in the Judgment of this great Divine, The Religion of the Oath in such Cases, is divided between GOD and that Creature on which the Oath is taken. And tho' no such Thing is now intended by Protestants who use these Rites; that will not exoner them, nor vindicate their Actions from Idolatry neither; as shall afterwards be made appear.

Arg. IV. These Religious Actions of Touching and Kissing are directed either *absolutely* and *ultimately* as well as immediately to the Bible its self; and thus they wou'd be Idolatry, as naked and gross as ever the Sons of Men were guilty of: Or else, They are directed to GOD, *mediately thro' the Book*, which is touch'd and kiss'd in Token of Respect to Him and his Will therein manifested; and thus we have GOD worshipped *statedly Before, By and Thro' a Creature*; which is likewise Idolatry: As is evident, from the Writings of all Protestant Divines against Papiſts, on the Head of Image Worship.

The Council of *Trent* seems to make Images, *Memorative Signs* only, or *active Objects* exciting us to worship GOD: Yet Protestants justly tax 'em with, and convict 'em of Idolatry, in so far as they worship GOD *statedly before, by and thro' the Creature*; which thing he has plainly forbidden in his Law. The *Council's* Words being worthy of Notice, are as follows

lows. *Imagines --- in Templis presertim habendas et retinendas, eisq; debitum Honorem, &c. i. e.* ' We ordain Images to be had and retain'd in Temples, and that due Honour and Veneration be imparted unto 'em, not because 'tis believ'd there is any Divinity or Vertue in 'em, for the which they shou'd be worshipped; But because the Honour given to 'em is refer'd to the Samplar which they represent: That by these Images which we *Kiss*, and before which we uncover our Heads and bow down, we may adore CHRIST, &c. *Seff: 25.* And the Second Council of Nice long before them, in the Year 787. decreed after the same Manner, ' That the Holy and Venerable Images --- might be *Kiss'd* and respected, but not ador'd with real Adoration, which is proper to GOD only. &c.

From all which we see, Those Idolaters plead only for Honour and Veneration to their *Images*, on Account of their Relation, to be express'd by uncovering of the Head, *Kissing*, &c. The same Thing that some now plead for to the *Bible*: And they deny all Belief of Divinity or divine Vertue in 'em, and all real proper divine Adoration of 'em; as much as others do now with Respect to the Book. They pretend only to worship GOD before 'em and by 'em; the same Thing which is done by them, who perform one of the most solemn Pieces of Divine Worship with *Touching* and *Kissing*, &c. Hence it is evident, That if *Image-Kissing* be *Idolury*, *Bible-Kissing* must be so too. The LORD's Name is *Jealous*, as was said, and therefore he'll receive, nor accept of no Worship, that's transmitted to him thro' a meer Creature. Compare *Exod: 32. 5 & 8.* with Command Second. The Creature can't come in betwixt Him and the Worshipper, but it must in Less or More partake with him in the Worship.

Remarkable to this Purpose, are Satan's Words to our Saviour, *Luke 4. 7. If thou wilt worship Before me, all shall be thine.* Which our Translators having render'd,

If thou wilt worship me, have thereby told us, That they (like sound Protestants) understood Worshipping *Before the Devil*, to be worshipping of the Devil : And indeed so our LORD understood it, as appears from his Answer, *Vers: 8.* compar'd with *Mat:4. 9.* 'Tis likely, Satan made both the Proposals to our LORD : *First*, That He wou'd *Worship him* : And when that was rejected, That at least he wou'd *worship before him*. Now as Worshipping before the Devil, is worshipping of the Devil; even so worshipping *before a Bible*, or Image (designedly and of set Purpose) is worshipping of 'em. One can no more worship GOD by and thro' the Creature, a *Bible* or an Image, and yet not be guilty of Spiritual Whoredom, than a Woman can transmit her Body to her own Husband thro' another that has some Relation to, or Resemblance of him; and not be an Harlot. The holy and learn'd *Perkins* (on Idolatry) says, 'Tis Idolatry to turn, dispose or direct the worship of GOD, or any Part thereof, to any particular Place or Creature, without his own Appointment.

That the Difference betwixt the *Bible* and *Images*, in this Case of their being Objects of Worship, is really none at all, shall be made evident anon.

Arg: V. If the *Kissing of Jeroboam's Calves* (*Hos: 13. 2.*) The *Kissing of Baal's Image* (*1 Kings 19. 18.*) The *kissing of the Hand in Honour of the Sun* (*Job 31. 27.*) The *bowing down to Nebuchadnezzar's Image*, in Obedience to the Laws then in Being (*Dan: 3.*) were Idolatry; Then *Kissing of the Bible* in Swearing is *Idolatry* too. That the former Practices were idolatrous, will not, I think, be call'd in Question: But the Difficulty will be anent admitting of the Consequence; which I make good thus.

The fore-mention'd Practices were Idolatrous, because therein a Religious Worshipping *Gesture*, naturally significant, was deliberately and designedly exhibited unto a Creature purposely set before the Worshippers, and ordain'd to have State and Place in the Worship.

The

The formal Ground of the Idolatry was not, That the Object they kiss'd, was of such a *Figure, Metal, or Shape*: But because it was a Creature, *somewhat* that by Nature was *not GOD*. Now in the present Case, the same Religious Worshipping Gesture is deliberately, and design'dly exhibited unto a Creature (namely the Bible) purpos'dly set before the Deponent, and ordain'd to have State and Place in the Worship: Therefore if 'twas Idolatrous in the Former Cases, it must be so in the Latter likewise.

This Argument will stand the firmer, That two Exceptions, which may be made against it, are remov'd. And perhaps it will be excepted, *That*

I. In the former Cases, *Religious Worship* was the declar'd Sense of the *Imposers*; But 'tis not so here: For Adoration is neither requir'd of, design'd nor understood by the Deponent, in his Kissing of the Book. To which I reply, 1st. Since the *Action* is the *same* in both Cases, the State of it the same, namely, in solemn Worship; the *Object* of it the same, in its general Nature, namely, a Creature, somewhat that by Nature is not GOD; yet set apart and ordain'd by Man to have Place in Religious Worship; The Sense of the *Imposers*, cannot alter the Nature and Meaning of the Act so circumstantiate, either one Way or other. For 2^{dly}. Tho' the Construction of Idolaters be Reason enough for abstaining from such Actions, as have an ill Meaning, meerly from their Will or Custom; yet there are *other Actions* and Gestures, which, when us'd in Worship, *signify Adoration* independently on either the *Imposer* or *Compliers's* Sense, Will or Intention: And this, we say, was the Case in the above mention'd Instances of Kissing, &c. For they requir'd these Gestures, because they were religious Gestures, the most significant and expressive of Adoration, that were then known, or could be found: But did not institute and appoint 'em to be Religious, or to signify Adoration when us'd in Worship: That was done to their Hand by *Nature's Institution*; so that they had

no more ado, but ordain 'em to be directed to such or such Religious Objects. And while the Case stands thus, let either the Party Imposing or the Party Complying pretend or declare otherways what they will; 'Tis *Protestatio contraria Facto*, i. e. Saying of one Thing and doing another. For the real Signification of the Act is still the same, and unalterable by them. 3dly. So *Papists* protest and declare; That they do not understand nor intend Religious Worshipping of Images, by Kissing of 'em and kneeling before 'em yet Protestants do repute 'em, and prove 'em Idolaters in these Practices.

II. Those were *vile Idols*, Creatures set apart and abus'd to Idolatry; therefore 'tis odious to compare the *holy Scriptures*, the Book of GOD's Will with 'em: For none dares refuse, *That* a Religious Respect is due unto the Bible, whereas no such *Thing* was due to *Jeroboam's Calves*, nor *Baal's Image*. To which I reply. 1st. *That* indeed makes the *proper Religious Use* of the Bible to be no *Will-Worship*, but it makes not the Religious *Kissing* of it in a State of Worship, to be no *Idolatry*: For tho' GOD has ordain'd the Bible to a religious Use; yet he ordain'd it as little to *That Use*; or to be an Object of Adoration, as he did *Jeroboam's Calves* or *Baal's Image*. *The Elements of Bread and Wine* in the LORD's Supper, being made *Signs and Seals of CHRIST* and all Covenant Blessings by Divine Appointment, are far more Divine Images than the *material Book* of the Scriptures, which is the *Work of Mens Hands*: Yet this does not elevate them to be Objects of Religious Kissing or Kneeling. Whatever respect be due to the Bible; 'tis certain, Adoration or Religious Kissing is none of it: For Nothing may be ador'd, but what can hear Prayer, *Isa. 46. 7. The Altar, the Sacrifices, the Priest's Garments* of Old, were all of 'em *holy Things*: Yet were they not to be Kis'd or Kneel'd to religiously. 'Tis true the *Bible* and *Images* differ, as to their special *Nature*; and so does the *Sun* and *Satan*: But as

to their *Esse adorabile*, or their *objective Presence* before the Worshipper, there is no Difference: For both are *Creatures, Memorative Vicarious Objects*, at whose Presence, and thro' whom GOD is ador'd. 2^{dly}. One may commit Idolatry with Images of *GOD's Institution*, no less than with those of *Man's Invention*: Since the LORD has forbid all Kissing of 'em, or bowing down religiously to 'em. If a Priest had *Kiss'd*, or falln down stately before the *Shew-bread* on the Table, or the *Cherubims* wrought in the Vail of the Temple, at that Instant when he was addressing himself unto GOD, or if the People while praying without and offering Sacrifice, had stately kiss'd the Altar of Burnt-offerings, wou'd not he and they both been guilty of Idolatry? From the Instance of the *Brazen Serpent*, we may see how ev'n a Divine Ordinance may be abus'd to Idolatry, and become an Idol.

Arg: VI. And last is, Mr. *Mather's*. Swearing upon the *Gospels* is Swearing by the *Gospels*, and therefore Idolatrous. That this was the original Signification of the Rite, is evident (he says) from all the Interpretation, which either the *Old Canon Law*, or the *Old Common Law*, as explain'd in old Precedents, have given of it: And to confirm all, The Oath of *Supremacy* was wont (he says) to conclude thus, *By the Contents of this Book. Magnal: Americ: Lib: 7. Pag: 13.* These Things, one who is unacquainted with both the old Canon Law and the old Common Law of England, cannot be Judge of: But no Doubt, that learn'd and ingenious Author is acquainted with the Laws of his own Country, and knows he has Ground for what he offers to the World on this Head. However the Argument seems to receive Strength from the following Particulars.

1st. Since this Practice is deriv'd from the Church of Rome unto us, the *Potish Principle* anent swearing does not alittle, confirm the Argument. For they hold it lawful to swear by the *Creatures* (viz. as they are Images and Mirrours of the Divine Perfections) and that both in Way of *Contestation*; of this the *Go-*

spels, in the *First* Place, are instanc'd in; Because there-
in (say they) the Truth and Faithfulness of GOD
is manifested: And likewise in Way of *Execration*;
Thus, say they, one may swear *By* such Creatures as
he dearly loves, and on which Divine Judgments may
be inflicted, in Case of Perfidy; as by his *Head*, his
Soul, his *Conscience*, &c For which see their Divines
and Consults, particularly *Aquinas* and *Petrus a Sancto*
Joseph, de Juramento. Which latter Sort of Oaths being
too common with many, in Conversation unto this Day;
'tis wish'd that such as use 'em, wou'd consider, to-
gether with the Impiety and Prophaness of 'em, the
Original they sprung from, and how near a Kin they
are to Idolatry. Now when we do as Idolaters did in
the very Acts of their Idolatry, GOD will account us
one with them, in Point of Guilt, ev'n tho' we do not
intend as they intended.

2dly. Since there is no Manner of *Appeal to GOD*,
neither as *Witness*, nor as *Judge* and *Avenger* in Case
of Perfidy; nay nor so much as Mention made of the

Name of GOD in the Words of the
* Nota. Of Oath * (except at the Close, in a Pray-
the many Oaths of an English er for Help to fulfil what is promis'd,
Frame, which the Author has in these Words, *So Help me GOD*;
seen never one had the Name which of Old, was wont to be, and yet
of GOD in it. is in the Church of Rome, accompani'd
with another Prayer to the Holy Evan-
gels for Help) The *Contestation* and *Im-*
precation Both must be made by the
Book, which is *Touch'd* and *Kiss'd*, or

they are not made at all; in which Case, It wou'd not
be an Oath. --- See all the Oaths in the Form and *Me-*
thod of Trial in Cases of High Treason, which is an-
nex'd to the *Collection of Statutes*, &c. and approv'd
by the *Twelve Judges*: --- And if the Oaths are ad-
ministrated according to the Form there laid down, no
Words are repeated, or spoken by the Deponent: For
First, They are order'd to lay the *Right Hand* on the
Book; Then they're call'd to hearken to their Oath;
then

then the *Clerk*, and for most Part the *Crier*, reads the Oath to 'em, in the Second Person, thus, *You shall* --- --- And concludes, *So Help You GOD*: Whereupon they are requir'd to Kiss the Book. And in all that Form of Trial, which otherwise is most exact and particular; there's not the least Intimation, That any Deponent is to rehearse the Words of his own Oath. Now that this touching and Kissing of the Book, shou'd allenarly be one's Solemn Oath, is truly shocking to think of. One can scarcely forbear to think, That such who impose, and such who comply with this new Way of addressing the *Most High*, have some Ground to fear, lest they may be found to have some Concern in that Complaint, *Jer: 5. 7. --- Thy Children have --- sworn by them that are no Gods. ---* And lest, in an evil Day, they may not have the same Liberty and Confidence to appeal unto GOD, as the Church had, *Psal: 44. 20. That they have not forgotten the NAME of their GOD, nor stretched out their Hands to a strange God.* For that Text also is thought to be mean'd of Kissing of the Hand in Worship.

How essential the *Name of GOD* is to a *proper Oath* †, any one may satisfie himself, by looking into the Scripture Texts on the Margin. *Swear unto me by the LORD*, says *Rahab* to the Spies: And *Saul* to *David*. *Swear unto me by GOD*, says the *Amalekite's* Servant to *David*. *Nebuchadnezzar* made *Zedekiah* swear by *GOD*; as did *Nehe-miah* the *Jews* that had marr'd *Strang Wives*, &c.

† *Deut: 6. 13. Josh: 2. 12. 1 Sam: 24. 21. & 30. 15. 2 Sam: 19. 7. 1 King: 2. 42. 2 Chron: 36. 13. Neh: 13. 25. Isa: 48. 1. & 65. 16. Jer: 12. 16. Dan: 12. 7. Heb: 6. 13. &c.*

REASON FIFTH.

IT is a Swearing after such a Manner, as we in these Lands, and particularly in *Scotland*, are by solemn Vows and Covenants bound not to swear. In the *Solemn League and Covenant*, we swore, *To endeavour a Reformation of the Church of England in Worship, according to the Word of GOD, and the Pattern of the best Reformed Churches, --- And to endeavour the Extirpation of Superstition, &c.* But alas! is the drinking in of her *Corruptions*, and the Learning of her *Ways*, a proper or likely Method for reaching those Ends? Is it not just such another Method of endeavouring her Reformation, as she takes to win *Papists*; and reform the Church of *Rome*, namely, by taking the Pattern of her Worship and Government from thence? And must it not be attended with the like Success? As a Disease is more easily catch'd than Health so it was justly fear'd, That *Deformation* to us, not *Reformation* to her wou'd be the Consequence of our *last Bargain*. --- And how contrary this Practice is to our own *National Covenant*, any one, who but looks into It, may see: For therein *Papistry* in general, and all its particular Heads are most solemnly and awfully abjur'd, and by Name, *All Antichrist's vain Allegories, Rites, Signs, and Traditions bro't into the Church without, or against the Word of GOD.* Now after that we've in such a Manner open'd our Mouths unto the LORD, how shall we thus go back? Can we break the Covenant and prosper, shall we take his Name in Vain, and be guiltless? Will such be able to say unto GOD, as *Psal: 44. 17.* -- *Neither have we dealt falsely in thy Covenant?*

Scotland has, since her Reformation from *Popery*, *Six* several *Times* open'd her Mouth nationally, unto the

Most

Most High; Swearing with *uplifted Hands*, That the LORD should be *our GOD*, and that she should be *holy to him*. And that in Order thereto, and in Obedience to his Command, they would keep His *Worship and Ordinances pure and incorrupt*; from Superstition and Idolatry. But alas! our going in with this new Mode of Swearing, is a Returning with the Dog to the Vomit again, a virtual and practical Gamlaying of all these Oaths.

The *Covenants* were once *Scotland's Glory*, namely while we walked in 'em. *The LORD was with us* while we were with him, he own'd us remarkably, both as a Nation and as a Church: But whoever forsake him, he hath said, *He'll forsake them*. Never were *Sacred Oaths* treated, in any Age or Nation, with such Ignominy and Contempt, as they have been in *Scotland*. They were *rescinded as Laws*, their *Obligation* declar'd *Null and Void as Oaths or Vows*; they were *Burnt* with dreadful Solemnities in several Cities of our Nation, by the *Hangman's Hand*; the Land was made to renounce and *abjure* 'em, 'twas made *Death* by the Law to own 'em; And yet ev'n in those dismal Days of Defection and Apostacy, they were own'd, and honourable Testimonies were born for 'em, before *Parliaments, Councils* and other *Courts of Justice*, in *Fields* and on *Scaffolds*, by some of all Ranks. And therefore because there was *some new Wine found in the Cluster*, and for his own Name's Sake he would not destroy us all; but bro't again our *Captivity*.

But when were these *Covenants* lifted up again out of that *Grave of Ignominy and Contempt*, wherein they were laid by wicked Hands? What has been done to roll away their Reproach, and put an Honour and Reputation on 'em, answerable to that *Contumely and Disgrace* they had been loaded with? 'Tis true the Breach of 'em has been cautiously confess'd, by the Church in her National Fasts: But few, I believe, will be able to persuade themselves, This was enough on the Back of a Time, of such dreadful Apostacy, as this
Land

Land had been guilty of. When GOD had broke the Yoke, and burst the *Bands of Popery, Prelacy and Slavery* from off our Necks; It had been but grateful and kindly, That we had yielded our selves a new to the LORD, and come under the *Bond of the Covenant*, unto him.

That more was not done, lay chiefly, I know, at the Door of our STATE, and many wish it had been laid more plainly and closely Home there: For if the Church had taken Courage unto her, and bestir'd her self, dealing boldly and freely with the State in that Matter; who knows but the LORD might have appear'd as he was wont to do, and so (I need not say perhaps) it had been better for us all.

The Mountains indeed were big, and formidable. But as great Mountains have vanish'd, and become a Plain, ev'n in *Scotland*, before these Covenants. *Nehemiah* himself alone contended with the Nobles of Judah (*Nehem: 13. 17.*) and it does not appear to have been without Success. The Day was when the Nobles of *Scotland* willingly offer'd themselves; but since the last Time (namely the unblest *Restoration of Jeroboam the Second*, who made *Britain and Ireland* to sin) when they altogether broke the Yoke, and burst the Bonds, and said of *Sion's King* we'll not have this Man to reign over us; let us break his Bands assunder, and cast his Cords from us *: Since that Time, I say, They cou'd never endure to hear of putting their Necks to the Work of the LORD. And therefore no Wonder they have been left to put their Necks under a more unkindly Yoke: Such as will not act for GOD while they may, are often by the just Judgment of GOD depriv'd; yea, left to deprive themselves, both of Opportunity and Capacity of acting either for GOD or for themselves. The Body of our Representatives never wou'd since the happy Revolution, nor might *Scotland* be allow'd to own the LORD for her GOD, after the Manner our *Fathers* had done

* *Judg: 5.*
9. Jer: 5.5.
Luc: 19.14.
Psal: 2. 3.
Neh: 3. 5.

done; and now the LORD owns us no more for a Nation. It was still alledg'd by the Men of Prudence, That the Time was not yet come, for repairing this Breach in the House of the LORD; till it was so far gone as to be *hid from the Eyes* of the Generation.

However 'tis a very obvious, tho' a melancholy Observation, namely, That since these sacred Oaths were troden under Foot, as has been said, *Oaths of one Sort and other* have been for a *Trial*, a *Judgment* and a *Snare* to this poor Land: And 'tis likely it must be so still, ev'n till we be bro't to search our Ways, and humble our selves after another Manner, return again, and *swear the LORD liveth in Truth, &c.*

'Tis true we're yet peaceably enjoying our Covenant-ed Reformation in great Part, and that in the Presence of our Enemies of all Sorts, for which we ought to be thankful and bless the LORD; and for *His* present *Majesty King GEORGE*, whom GOD sent most seasonably for our Deliverance, when we were again bro't to the very Borders of *Rome* and *Ruin*: But how we are holding fast, and how earnestly we are contending for the *Faith*, *Worship* and other *Priviledges* once deliver'd unto this Church, and faithfully transmitted down to us; Our Behaviour in this and other Matters, will declare unto those that come after us. --- I know the *Assembly* 1707, foreseeing Danger to Religion from the *Union*, then lately concluded, made an Act against *Innovations* in the Worship of GOD: But what has been done in Pursuance of that Act, with Respect to the present Case, is so little known, that we have not heard Word of it.

Our Covenants, 'tis true are *Old Deeds*, yet not of that Sort, which are liable to *Prescription*: For *Israel's* Covenant with the *Gibeonites* was older by some Hundreds of Years, at that Time when GOD punish'd the Land with a Famine (*2 Sam: 21. 1.*) for *Saul's* Breach of it. But in Regard there are profess'd Presbyterians of several Ranks, who have begun, especially of late Years, to question their Obligation on us, *Posterity*

fity, now at such a Distance of Time; They'll grant 'em binding on us *Vi Materia*, in so far as the Matter of 'em is *Moral*; But to 'em it is a *Fest*, to say, we're oblig'd *Vi Juramenti*, by Vertue of our *Fathers Oath*: Therefore 'tis wish'd, That some wou'd, *de Novo*, set this Matter of the Obligation of Religious National Vows on Posterity, in its due Light; as also explain our *National Covenant*, many of the Terms in which, are as little understood by the Generality of People, as our Forefathers Language some Hundreds of Years ago.

Since our Covenants have been all this While, from the Time of their *Burning and Burial* near *Threescore Years* ago, still lying under a Grave-stone of Law; 'Tis great Pity, That no one in *Scotland* has had the *Kindness* and *Courage* to do so much for the Removal of it, as the Honet *Aldermen* and *Sheriffs* of *London* lately did in a Case relating to one of 'em. But how ever they were buri'd before, 'tis certain, they ly now more deeply *interr'd* than ever, in the Rubbish of our Nation (and 'tis pity, that *Scotsmen* shou'd still be throwing more Weights on their Grave, by such Practices as this: For they never did *Scotland* nor *England* neither an ill Turn) and in the Eye of Reason, without all *Hope of Resurrection*: For *Rebus sic stantibus*, as Matters now stand, 'tis morally impossible that ever they shou'd have the Countenance of Law; and as little does it appear how it shall ever be otherwise. Yet, *Why shou'd it be thought a Thing incredible with us, that GOD should raise the Dead*. Some can never, but with Satisfaction and Hope, reflect on the last Words of that glorious Martyr Mr. *James Guthrie*, before he went off the Ladder, *The Covenants, the Covenants will be the Reviving of Scotland*.

Now tho' all the Reasons already offer'd against this Practice, did fall short of their Design; That is to say, Tho' it were, in it self, only an indifferent lawful Thing; there is yet another Reason against it, from Scripture, That wou'd, ev'n in that Case effectually reach it, namely.

REASON SIXTH.

THE Scandal that attends, and is likely to follow upon this Way of Swearing, at least in Scotland. --- And here I must beg the Reader's Patience and Leave for a little ; Both because the Subject is, in it self, somewhat intricate, and because of its Importance : It being one of the most necessary and weighty Doctrines of Christianity, relating to one's Life and Walk, before Men in the World ; how little soever it be understood or regarded by the most Part of Christians.

To give Scandal or Offence in the Sense of the New Testament, is to lay a Stumbling Block, or an Occasion to fall in our Neighbour's Way †. 'Tis the Occasioning his Fall either into Sin, or Grief and Sorrow on the Account of our real or suppos'd Sin *. Scandal † in general

† *Matth: 18. 7. Luc: 17. 1. Rom: 14. 13, 21: 16. 17. I Cor: 8. 13. Rev: 2. 14. * Rom: 14. 15.*

† *Σκαδαλον is a Word to be found in the Scriptures only. Some say, It signifies properly the Bridge in a Trap, the which when any Thing touches, the Trap falls, and it is caught: And thence 'tis us'd to signify any Kind of Snare. Others derive it from σταλω to halt, and so it signifies any Thing that makes a Man to halt, or to go lame, & thence, any Thing that occasions a Man to sin. It's variously render'd in the New Testament, A Thing that does offend, Mat. 13. 41. An Occasion to fall, Rom: 14. 13. An Occasion of stumbling, I Job: 2. 10. A Stumbling Block, Rev: 2. 14: But most commonly, An Offence. Tertull. describes Scandal --- Ædificans ad Delictum. Aquin: Præbens Occasionem Ruinæ spiritualis. Amef:*

-- Quo alii possint vel excitari ad Peccandum, vel impediri aut retardari a beneficiendo. Medul. L. 2. C. 16. §. 48. P. Mart: Quo impeditur Evangelii Cursus. Grotius, Omne id quod Exitii Causam præbet.

Scandal is either; 1st. Active, and that either per se, when a Thing is inductive into Sin in its own Nature. Or per Accidens, When a Thing is no Occasion of Sin, in it self; but only from One's Apprehension & Mistake. Or 2^{ly}. Passive, viz The Fall of one into Sin, which is either Datum, arising from th. Active Scandal of another (whether it be so per se or per accidens) as its Moral Cause. Or acceptum, as when one is a meer Occasion of another's Fall, but noways culpable, as when one takes Occasion to sin from our doing our Duty.

The Sin that's occasion'd by the Use of Liberty in Things indifferent when scandalous, i. e. our Neighbour apprehends 'em sinful, is either, 1st. A like Speech, Action or Omission; but with a Condemning, or at least a doubting Conscience, Rom: 14. 14, 23. 1 Cor: 8. 7, 10. One is emboldn'd by another's Example, to do what otherwise he is not satisf'd is lawful. Or 2^{dly}. Judging and censuring the Action as unlawful, and the Person as licentious: Whereupon follow many miserable Consequences, both to the Party scandalizing and the Party scandalized: 1 Cor: 10. 29, 30. Rom: 14. 16. 3^{dly}. Grief and Trouble on Account of the Offence and Dishonour, which is conceiv'd to be done unto GOD,

general seems to be well defin'd (by an Anonymous Author on that Subject) A Word or Action, or the Omission of either, manifest to another, which occasions his Fall into Sin or Sorrow. If this Word or Action, or Omission be a Duty or any Thing necessary, the Scandal that follows thereupon is only Taken and not given; if it be any Thing Evil, Scandal is given, whether it be taken or not: But if it be Indifferent, the Scandal is only given, when 'tis taken.

Scandal in Things indifferent, is, An unnecessary Word

Word or Action, or Omission of either, manifest to another, where- by one knows his Neighbour will be scandalized. i. e. Will take Occasion either to sin himself, or to be greiv'd at the suppos'd Sin of another. --- The determining, or defining of what is necessary and what not, is the main *Hinge* on which the whole *Business* turns.

The Learn'd *Ameſius* confines it to that which is necessary by *GOD's Command* *. Which, if taken strictly, will, I apprehend, be thought to straiten the Matter too much: For if a Thing is absolutely necessary, ev'n by a *Concurrence of Circumstances*, 'tis certain, in that Case it can't be Matter of *Scandal* given. As for *David* to eat *Shew-bread*, or for one to eat *Things offer'd to Idols*, when they cou'd have no other Food.

But when a Thing has only a *Comparative Necessity*, and the End may be attain'd, by other Means; Both *Popish* and *Protestant Casuists* agree, it ought to be *forborn in Case of Scandal*. Yea, tho' the End can't be altogether so well and conveniently attain'd, yet if it may be at all obtain'd, without very great Incon-

venience, by other Means; the using or doing of the scandalous Thing, tho' more convenient, renders one culpable and guilty of *Active Scandal*. Thus the *Apostle* resolves on a *Total Abstinence* from the Use of *Flesh*,

is the ordinary *Ad-junct*, Companion or Effect of it, on such as are tender of *GOD's Honour*: Tho' it be not the *Formalis Ratio*, or that wherein properly it does consist, *Rom; 14. 15.* Other *Provocation* or *Dis-pleasure* is not considerable in the Point of *Scandal*; But that which is caus'd with Respect to *GOD* and his *Glory*. For *People* may be, and often are displeas'd at our doing what tends to their *E-dification*: But *Scandalizing* is always destructive to the *Soul*; hence 'tis commonly by *Divines* term'd *Soul Murder*, from *Rom: 14.*

15. 20. *I Cor: 8. 11.*

* *Tum autem Scandalum dicitur dari --- cum illud quod ex Mandato DEI non est nobis necessarium --- temere committitur, Med. L. 2. C. 16. §. 53.*

to his dying Day, however inconvenient it might be; rather than to do that which wou'd be a Scandal to his Brother, 1 Cor. ult. *If Meat make my Brother to offend, &c. Rom: 14. 21. It is good neither to eat Flesh, nor drink Wine, nor any Thing whereby thy Brother stumbleth or is offended or made weak.* Tho' the Brazen Serpent was the most convenient, and moving Memorial of the miraculous Delivrance in the Wilderness, from the stinging of the *Fiery Serpents*; yet since the Memory of that, might be preserv'd by other Means, ev'n *It*, having become a Scandal to the People, and an Occasion of Idolatry, must be destroy'd and broken to Pieces, 2 King: 18. 4. -- In no Instance of a Christian's Walk, will spiritual Wisdom find more ado, than in this Case, to discern and judge by the Word, what ought to be done, and what to be left undone; in the several Occurrences of Providence. Here *Love* shou'd be wary (says holy *Ruthesford*) of laying a *Straw* in the Way of any *weak Traveller*. -- That no Command of humane Authority can make an indifferent Thing, that's scandalous, become necessary, will afterwards be made appear. Only in a Word here: Till once an indifferent *Thing* is made *Convenient* by Circumstances, no Command of Man, is capable of making it *Necessary*.

Now giving, but not granting *this Practice* to be in it's self an illess Lawful Thing; yet being *Doubtful* and suspected with us;

* *The Church of Scotland, the English Dissenters, and reform'd Divines generally, have ever reckon'd the Scandal given by the Use of Humane Ceremonies in Worship (supposing 'em ev'n Indifferent as Formalists pretend) to be a good Argument against 'em.*

the Scandal * that does and is like further to follow upon it, is manifold: As 1st. Many that are not fully perswaded in their own Mind of it's Lawfulness, may (and in such Cases never fail to) be induc'd by Authority and Example (which can ne'r afford the least Ray of Light to the Mind) to go into the Practice with a

Yea,

Doubt-

Doubting Conscience: Whereby the Authority of GOD in the Soul, which Conscience is invested with, is shaken off; Another Father and Master is set up in the Room of GOD and Christ; Conscience is wounded, weakned and lyes prostrate, so that he for whom Christ dy'd is in Danger of perishing, *Rom: 14. 13, 23. 1 Cor: 8. 10, 11.* — Shall not the Conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat, &c. 2dly. Others are or will be provock'd to

uncharitable Censuring, and rash judging, *1 Cor: 10. 29, 30.* for why is my Liberty judged, &c. 'Tis true this is their Sin, but such are necessary to it, who lay the stumbling Block before 'em. People commonly, by the indiscreet Use of their Liberty in such Cases, not only get a Blot to their own Names, but bring also a Stain on that Liberty which they abuse: Holy Providence oftimes so ordering it, as one of the natural Punishments of their Way, that an active Scandal tending unto Sin, is pay'd Home with a passive Scandal tending to Dispraise: *Why am I evil spoken of,* says the Apostle, for that, &c. 3dly. Others, tho' not so weak as the former, will yet be wounded and griev'd in their Spirit; on account of the Guilt and Defection, the Dishonour to GOD, and Danger to Souls; They espy, or think they espy in it, *Rom: 14. 15.* But if thy Brother be griev'd with thy Meat, now walkest thou not charitably: Destroy not him with thy Meat, &c. Now 'tis a very undesirable Thing to sadden the Hearts of the Righteous, obstruct their Progress, mar their Comfort, damp and discourage 'em in their Christian Course. We're not to grieve the

Yea, Sanderfon himself says, That, tho' humane Ceremonies pertaining to the External Decency & Solemnity of Divine Worship, are not to be condemn'd as unlawful, yet they are, perhaps, better let alone; at least where is just fear of Scandal
--- Et si praestaret, fortasse non usurpavi ubi Scandali metus. de Obligat. Conscient. pralect. 4. Sect. 29.

Spirit of GOD in our own Hearts, nor in the Hearts of the Godly, our Brethren and Fellow Members of the same Mystical Body neither. GOD himself does not willingly grieve 'em, and much less ought we. *4thly.* The *Prophane* will be *harden'd*, the *Superstitious confirm'd*, and both made glad when they find, there are different Sentiments and Practices anent this Matter, among Professors of the same true Religion: Because it furnishes 'em with somewhat to say against the Way of Truth and Holiness which they never lov'd. Now we're to avoid giving of Scandal to the Wicked, as well as to the weak, *1 Cor: 10. 32. Give none Offence neither to Jews, nor to Gentiles, &c. Mat. 17 ult. 5thly.* By the Compliance of some, the Magistrate may at length be *provok'd to use Severity against others*, who dare not take an Oath after that Manner for fear of Sin. Now since in some Cases, *we ought to lay down our Lives for the Brethren*, *1 Joh: 3. 16.* much more ought we, sure, to abtain from a Practice, at best but lawful; when our going in with it, will enlanger 'em in their Souls, and in all that's Valuable to 'em in this World too. I might add *Lisly*, It has the *Appearance of Evil*, not in the Apprehension of some only, but really in it's self; as having in it an Aptness to lead People unto worse: Now in so far forth as a Thing has the Appearance of Evil, 'tis morally evil and forbidden, *1 Thes: 5. 22. abstain from all appearance of Evil*; but this perhaps, will seem to belong rather to *Scandal per se*. By Means of all which the *Wo Matth: 18. 7.* comes on the *World* of By-standers and On-lookers: In which Case our LORD's Words are piercing, *But wo to that Man by whom the Offence cometh* --- Many and Dismal are the Effects of publick Scandals given by People's using of their Liberty, in such contraverted Cases; not to be enumerated here †. And

when a Practice is thus scandalous, tho' in it's self lawful, it is not.

† Such as are once embarked in the Practice, will being

1st. Information or ren-
d'ring of Reasons for our
Practise, will be sufficient to
excuse us, while Scruples full
remain with the weak. For
when a Person goes in, once,
with a doubtful contraverted
Practise, he'l not want Rea-
sons enow, such as please
himself, and he thinks shou'd
satisfie others. And one is
not to be reckon'd obstinate
nor his Ignorance affected,
tho' his Scruples remain af-
ter Information: For the
Power of Education, Custom,
Prejudice and many other
Things may cast a Mist be-
fore one's Eyes, and hinder
from

being stimulated by Hu-
mour and Honour, leave
no Stone unturn'd for
the Support and Defence
of it; and strange are
the Colours that Men
of fine Parts, will put
on Things of a very ill
Hue: Yea, often they're
for'd to espouse new
Principles (which like-
ways they must defend)
for the Defence of the
new Practise. The ju-
dicious Clarkson obser-
ves, That a Romish
Practise can never be
defended without a Ro-
mish Principle: Hence
the Doctrine of a Church
can be no longer safe,
when once Ceremonies are adopted. They who stand
off and can't be wro't into a Compliance, besides the
Passion, bitter Zeal, and rash judging they're scandali-
z'd into, come often to place too much of their Re-
ligion, in holding off from, and bearing Testimony a-
gainst the Contraverted Thing. He who did not eat,
Rom: 14. might come to reckon himself a much better
Christian than he who did.

And it has been seen, that Parties have come, at
length, to go as far off from, and to study to be as
unlike one another, in other Things too, as they could:
sighting, overlooking or letting drop many good and
necessary Things, muerly because the other set up for
'em; tho' once in a Day they were one in these Mat-
ters. They'l strike at one anothers Principles and O-
pinions without Mercy; so that the Truth often is
not safe, but gets Wounds among 'em: For he who
does not love his Brother, is ready to fall out with
every

every Thing he is for. The Side which suffers most in Reputation may by Satan's cunning (who will not want Furniture enough in such Circumstances to busk up plausible Arguments with) be insensibly entic'd and drawn (when a suitable Bait and Opportunity is laid before 'em) to go such Lengths as once they themselves never thought of, but as Hazael did in another Case; & so may the other too, towards an Extrem of another Nature.

Animosities, Suspicions, Divisions Shisms are often begot and fomented in a Church by Means of 'em: Whereby the great Laws of Love, Peace and Unity, which our Lord has made Fundamental to Religion, are broken in pieces, and troden under Foot.

How destructive they are to Peace and Edification, is manifest both from Experience and that Scripture, Rom: 14. 19. Let us therefore follow after the Things which make for Peace and Things where-with one may edifie another; whereby it's intimated, that they are the Bane and Ruin of both the one and the other. ---- It has been observ'd also in Times past that, when the Pastoral Staves of Beauty and Bands, were once broken That that Side which

from discerning the strength of Reasons. The Apostle Paul gave strong Reasons for the Lawfulness of a common Use of Meats formerly Unclean to the Jews; and of Meats, at a private Feast, which had been offered to Idols: Yet wou'd he not allow himself, nor others neither, to use that Liberty, when there was Danger of giving Scandal thereby, Rom: 14. 20, 21. 1 Cor: 8. 13. And it's to be consider'd here, That a Scandal is as readily and as often laid before the corrupt, deprav'd Inclination, as before the blind Mind. Few will believe, I think; that Hezekiah had done well, if he had suffer'd the Brazen Serpent to remain where it was, and only order'd the Priests to preach to the People that it was not GOD. Nor

2dly. Will the Command of Humane Authority secure us from

from Guilt in such Cases. For the Magistrate is under that Law of GOD, *Thou shalt not scandalize thy Brother.* as much as the meanest Subject is: And if he sins in commanding, we can never be bound, for *Conscience Sake*, to obey; tho' for *Wrath's Sake* in some Cases, we may obey: As when the Matter of the Command is not any Thing that concerns Conscience; But somewhat that is otherwise very hard and heavy. Obligation to Obedience, and Authority to command are Correlates, so that where there is no Authority from GOD to command, there can be no Obligation from GOD upon our Conscience to obey. That's truly a Bright Tho't of *Petrus de Aliaco's*, which I find cited by *Gilberts* in his *Affize Sermon*, Namely, ' That as the Will of GOD exerting and putting forth his natural Power; is in natural Things, the first Efficient Cause; So the Will of GOD exerting and putting forth his Moral Power and Authority, is in Moral Things the first obliging Rule: And as all Things in Nature act

depen-

tion has to be Cautious and wary in the like Cases?

which found it self possit of most Power, has taken up the Instruments of the foolish Shepherd, Zech. 11. 15. ---- In one Wera the Life of Religion is eaten cut by such Scandals, as by a Gangrene; and the common Interest of it suffers extremely; for oftimes while Parties are wrangling together, the common Enemy, unobserv'd of both Sides, comes in and sows Tares.

Who now that considers the Nature of such active Scandals, being, in so far as they are such, Moral Evils, and amounting in the Scripture Description of 'em to the heinous Guilt of Soul Murder; These and many more such like Direful Effects of 'em; Together with the Exemplary Care & Tenderness of the Apostles in such Matters; But he must see what

great Need every Chri-

‘ dependingly upon the Will of GOD, putting forth
 ‘ his Natural Power as the first Efficient Cause; so
 ‘ in Morality all Laws oblige dependingly upon the
 ‘ Will of GOD, putting forth his Moral Power as the
 ‘ first obliging Rule. ’Tis a Flower of the Imperial
 Crown of Heaven to stamp meer Will into a Law
 and call others to Obedience. The Command of an
 inferior can never oblige us, when it’s contrary to the
 Command of a Superior: And that this is the Case, when
 the Magistrate requires a Thing which, tho’ lawful in
 it’s self, will scandalize our Brother, is so obvious
 that scarcely does one need to be told it. Fur-
 ther, Publick Authority can’t take away the Aptness,
 there is in some Things, to entice unto Sin: Or it can
 ne’r alter the Nature of an Act, so as to make that
 which is inductive unto Sin, not to be so. There-
 fore ’tis but a loose unweigh’d Tho’t, for any to
 speak of *Christian Liberty* and the *Command of the*
Magistrate; as what ought to cast the Ballance in such
 Cases: For when the doing of a Lawful Thing will
 scandalize, GOD’s Law has laid an Embargo on our
 Liberty in that Case; which all the Authority on
 Earth can’t take off: Otherwise, Humane Authority may
 make an Act of Disobedience to the sixth Command,
Rom: 14: 15. become an Act of Obedience to the
 fifth Command. Tho’ these Things will, to some,
 seem hard of Digestion, yet they’re no other than
 the common Doctrine of Reform’d Divines, and of

† Nulla est Authori-
 tas Humana, quæ Acti-
 onem illam reddere po-
 tēst Licitam, qua Scan-
 dalum proximo datur, &
 c. No humane Authority
 can render that Action
 Lawful, which will give
 Scandal to our Neigh-
 bour, says the Judicious
 and

the Church of Scotland; †
 clearly deduc’d as well from
 the Law of Nature (the
 Precept of not Scandalizing
 being a prime Branch of lo-
 ving our Neighbour as our
 selves, and of doing to others
 as we would be done by) as
 from Scripture. ’Tis true
 the Doctors of Aberdeen,
 the Church of England Di-
 vines,

vines, and Men of that Kidney, do all of 'em (for a known Reason) take another Road ; pleading the Precept of not scandalizing in the Use of in-

and *Learn'd Amefius* Medul. Lib. 2. cap. 16. §. 52. *As also* Nulla Authoritas humana, vel tollere potest Scandali rationem ab eo quod alias esset

Scandalum, vel peccati rationem a Scandalo dato, de Conscient. Lib. 5. cap. 11. §. 16. So *Rutherfoord*, *Calderwood*, *Gillespy*, *Durham*, &c.

Active Scandalizing is as essentially murdering of one for whom Christ dy'd; as to worship an Idol is essentially Idolatry, says Rutherfoord on Scandal in Answer to the Doctors of Aberdeen, Pag. 38. As also, if That may be commanded which otherways, without, or before the Commandment wou'd have been Scandalizing of our Brother, (against the sixth Command) then may that also be commanded which without, or before that Commandment, was Adultery, Theft, Perjury, against the seventh, eight and ninth Commands. ibid. P. 47.

Object: Obedience to to the Magistrate is Debitum justitiæ, a Debt of Justice; but not Scandalizing of my Brother, is only Debitum Charitatis, a Debt of Charity: Now Duties of the former Sort, oblige more strictly, than these of the Latter: I'm more oblig'd to pay my Debt than to give Charity to the Poor, Answer 1st. That the Duties we owe by Way of Justice are more Obligatory, than these we owe by Way of Charity, holds true Cæteris paribus, when Duties of the Moral Law, or Law of Nature are compar'd together: As if my Father and Neighbour were both Drowning, I'm oblig'd to save my Father; Or if my Creditor and the Poor were both craving the one his own, the other an Alms; I'm most oblig'd, and first oblig'd to pay my Debt: But it holds not, Generally and Universally; as when Positive Duties we owe by the Tye of Justice, are compar'd with the Moral Duties we owe by the Tye of Charity, or when

the Minima Justitiæ are compar'd with the Maxima Charitatis. Now this is the Case; when the Positive Command of Man requiring an in-different Thing is compar'd with the Precept of

different Things, to cease to oblige when once the Magistrate's Authority is interpos'd: But how agreeably to Scripture and sound Reason the Reader may Judge. The

*not scandalizing our Brother. Since the Positive Commands of the LORD our GOD, cede and give Place to the Commands of Charity, arising out of the Moral Law, and Law of Nature, yea, ev'n to Works of Mercy to Mens Bodies; (as Preaching, Praying and all holy Ordinances must be laid aside hic & nunc, when our Neighbour's Life is in Hazard, his House on fire, his Corn or Cattle in the Flood) how much more must the positive Commands of Men, give Place unto the Works of Mercy to Men's Souls? Since the LORD himself says, In all such Cases, Ple have Mercy and not Sacrifice, Matth: 12. 7. Ought not Mortals to say so too? Hence 'tis clear, That all positive Laws must strike and give Place, when the Law of Nature, or the necessary Duties of Love and Mercy stand in their Way. 2dly. Not scandalizing of our Neighbour is a Debt of Justice, unto GOD and him both, as well as a Debt of Charity, &c. See this Objection fully answer'd and expos'd by the Learn'd Rutherford, *ibid.* P. 50, 51, 52.*

Object: At this Rate one must slight all the Magistrates Commands, for some or other will ever pretend Scruples: Answer, 1st This Objection concludes against all Forbearance in any Case, on the account of Scandal, if once the Thing is enjoin'd by the Magistrate; and consequently against the Apostles Doctrine: Also it carries in it a tacit Imputation upon the Law of GOD, as if his Commands, in some Cases, were incompatible and impossible. 2dly. When the Matter of his Commands, is necessary, be offended who will, we must obey: And whatever Scandal follows there-upon

The Bishop of Bangor seems indeed to have left the Rout in this Point; For he speaks of it as becomes a Divine, and very candidly owns, That Law-makers may be guilty of laying *stumbling Blocks* in some Cases, ev'n when they enjoin *Necessary Duties*, as in the Case of the *Sacramental Test*. And with Respect to Law-makers, he says, *upon, is purely taken, and we are blameless; because of the Law of GOD, requiring us, in such Cases, To be subject for Conscience Sake. As when we're call'd to give Allegiance, pay Taxes, &c. 3dly. 'Tis not so, in Fact, as is suggested: For ev'n where Subjects are most squeamish, 'tis not found, That they scruple Obedience, except where the Matter concerns Religion and Conscience more immediately, and they have as much Shadow of Ground or Reason as the weak Rom. 14. 1 Cor: 3. 10 had for their Scruples.*

When the Magistrate requires a Thing in its self Lawful, but scandalous, and enforces his Command, with grievous Penalties; so that one is in Danger of being ruin'd as to his Worldly Interest, and rend'ed incapable of serving his Generation, if he does not obey: The Case is truly Difficult. Hence some Divines have declin'd giving their Judgment of it. Tho' some may perhaps think, That in so doing they modestly declar'd themselves. The holy and zealous Rutherford, indeed calls, 'The Business of Penalties, Logick from a foreSkin: And says, ' If the Thing commanded by Authority be Lawful and Expedient, Disobedience is Sin, whether Punishment follow on it or not; But if it is Inexpedient, or will give Scandal, the Penalty will never make it Duty. *Ibid.* Pag: 25, and thro' out. ' A Thing in so far as it gives Scandal is Morally Evil, say others, and we're ne're to do ill, that Good may come of it. The Judicious Clarkson (for it might be reckon'd Presumption in me, to offer any Tho'ts of mine own on such a tender Point) on Taking up the Cross, goes pretty near this Case; for he says, ' One may suffer
for

' for CHRIST in refusing : says, ' That in the Case of
 ' to do that which in it ' laying Stumbling Blocks,
 ' self is lawful to be done, ' and of falling by 'em, there
 ' when the doing of it ' is always a Fault on both
 ' may be an *Offence* to o- ' Sides: And to be answer'd
 ' thers, *Pag: 380.* That ' for by both Parties con-
 ' we're to suffer for avoi- ' cern'd. And methinks, It
 ' ding the Appearance of ' is not the Part of a *Chri-*
 ' Evil, or for avoiding that ' *stian Divine* to take off all
 ' which is Evil by Con- ' Blame intirely from the
 ' struction, or that which, ' *Strong Side*, and to lay it
 ' tho' in its self lawful, is ' on the *weak.* *Paul* did
 ' Evil by *Accident*, as be- ' quite otherwise; & seems to
 ' ing an Occasion of Sin to ' have laid much the greater
 ' others: *Where he shews,* ' Weight upon those that are
That the Apostle Paul suf- ' *Strong;* and to press it as
fer'd Persecution because he ' their Duty, not to lay
wou'd not conform to a ' Stumbling Blocks in the
(Then) lawful Ceremony, ' Way of the *Weaker.* *Com-*
Gal: 5. 11. And how *mon Rights of Subjects de-*
small Matters the Primi- ' *fended.* *Pag: 262.* See also
tive Christians suffer'd for. ' *Pag: 267, 268.* Where he
P. 386, 388. And that it ' very fairly unfolds the A-
becomes not a Christian in ' postle's Sense, *Rom: 14.* and
the Day of Trial, to enquire ' shows, That a Thing's being
whether the Matter be ' lawful and *Commendable* in
small or great, but whether ' it self, will not warrant the
it be lawful or unlawful? ' *Pra-*
And if it is not warrant-
ed by the Law of GOD, how small soever it may seem,
'tis an Occasion great enough to suffer any Thing rather
than yield to it. That in that Case there ought to be
Nihil obstinacius Christiano, i. e. Nothing more obsti-
nate than a Christian. *Pag: 407.* *That Things small in*
themselves, may become monstrously big in their Circum-
stances, Consequences, Effects and Attendants. *As, if*
we stand oblig'd against 'em by Sacred and Solemn Bonds,
if they give Scandal to others, if they make us like Ido-
laters, if they may prove an Inlet to greater Ills, &c.
Where

Practising of it ; and much less the *Enacting* of it into a Law for all equally : When there is Danger of laying before others a *Stumbling Block*, or an Occasion to sin thereby. This he calls one of the most *Noble Doctrines of Christianity*, -- and which is impli'd in the comprehensive Duty of *Universal Charity*. Nor,

3dly. Will the Pretence of a *Double Scandal*, or a *Scandal equal on both Sides*; bear one out in this or the like Practice : For (taking *Scandal* in its proper and primary Sense) there can be no such Thing as a *Comparative*

Where he shews, That the *Popish Mass sprang from a stunted Liturgy, the Papacy from a Presidency among Ministers, the Invocation of Saints from a Religious Commemoration of 'em. These Things he is very full upon ; and adds P. 412. That he who will not bear the Cross rather than yield to Things thus aggravated, under a Pretence, That they're Matters of small Moment, never intends to bear the Cross at all. The less the Evils are, says he, for which one bears the Cross, it shews the greater Love, gives the greater Encouragement to others, and will have the*

greater Reward ; And alludes to Luk: 19. 17. Because thou hast been faithful in a very little, &c. Finally, One has this Tho't on the Case, namely, That 'tis a Competition betwixt one's external Bene esse, and the Spiritual Safety of others. And if it be so, 'tis much easier to know what ought to be done ; than it will be, to behave accordingly. Eat not (says the Apostle, I Cor: 10. 28.) for the Earth is the LORD's, and the Fulness thereof.

*Of all others, Magistrates, Ministers and Publick Persons have most Need to be cautious in this Business of giving Scandal ; both because of the prevalent and extensive Influence of their Authority and Example, while they live (for ordinarily People affect a Conformity unto, and pride themselves in copying after their Example, who are the Directors and Censors of other Mens Lives ; as we may learn from that old Question, Have any of the Rulers or Pharisees believed?) and likewise be-
cause*

because they are in greatest Danger of contracting Guilt, in some Sort, after they are dead: In that they'll have all the bad Consequences of their Example, Publick Acts or Omissions, ev'n unto latest Posterity, to answer for in the Day of the LORD. Any one may see in Scripture, this will be Jeroboam's Case. Parents have Need to consider well what they do before their Children. Such as go with Child, or give Suck think themselves oblig'd to forbear many Things.

prative Scandal, or an active Scandal equal on both Sides. It is not *Casus dabilis*, a possible Case, says the Famous Rutherford. Scandal can't be Given, but upon one Side only; otherwise one might be bro't into such Circumstances, that whatever Hand he turns to, He must sin: Which wou'd fix a Blot upon Divine Providence, not to be thought of, without Abhorrence. *Nulla datur talis Perplexitas, ut necessarium sit sibi Homini, sive hoc vel illud faciat, sive non faciat, Scandalum alicui dare: i. e.* There can be no such Perplexity of Circum-

stances, as that it shall be necessary to a Christian, let him do what he will, to give Scandal to his Neighbour. Says Amesius, *de Conscient: L. 5. C. 11. Sect: 18:*

And here again the Church of England Divines with their Followers, take a singular Road of their own, alledging, That when an Indifferent Thing is once Enacted into a Law; our Non-observance of it, will scandalize the Magistrate, and the more Judicious: Which Scandal, say they, is greater, and therefore more to be shun'd, than that which is given to the weak by Compliance: Tho' they have been told, Times past Reasoning, That they suppose an Impossible Case, namely, That Scandal may be given, whatever Hand we turn to; and That hence the Scandals are not of the same Kind. For by our Compliance we draw the Weak into Sin; whereas in Case of Non-compliance, the Magistrate and others are only displeas'd with us, because we do not as they wou'd have us: Which can be call'd Scandal in an improper

improper Sense only; and is not given neither: For People may be out of Humour with us, and treat us ill, when doing what is really for their Edification. When the Law of GOD says, *Eat not*, we may not eat; whoever be displeas'd with our forbearing: For in that Case, They're in Effect displeas'd with us for observing of GOD's Command, *Scandalize not*; which being negative, binds *ad Semper. i. e.* in all Differences of Time: And so the Scandal is meerly Taken, not Given. For we may not violate the Law of Love, nor destroy our Neighbour's Soul for any Man's Pleasure.

It might have been pretended, That the strong, Rom. 14. by their forbearing, wou'd offend a greater Number of Persons, and these more considerable than these whom they pleas'd, and that they'd but encourage and confirm the weak in their Scruples, †

Yet I hope none will venture to say, that they, when they forbore to eat in Obedience to GOD's Command, gave Scandal; or that any Humane Authority cou'd have warranted 'em, in eating, while they knew the weak were in danger of being scandaliz'd, thereby. And the Reason is evident, namely, because no Power on Earth can dispense with the sixth Command, nor make de-

stroy-

† *And to disregard and despise, what weak People may think or say of us, when we're but in the Exercise of our Liberty; is indeed a Piece of the Manliness of Degenerate Humane Nature: But far enough from that Innocent, Inoffensive Disposition of little Children, which our LORD requires in all his Disciples Mat. 18.*

Cases there are indeed wherein, let us do what we will, Passive Scandal will follow; and yet we be blameless. The Jews stumble at John Baptist, because he did not eat and drink with them; and at our LORD because he did: Yet both were Blameless, and gave no Scandal. Tho' the Jews shou'd have been scandaliz'd at Peter for eating with the Getniles,

2. yet had he been Blameless: because the Gentiles were by no Means to be bro't under the Ceremonial Law. Whereas by eating with the Jews, he gave active Scandal both to the Gentiles; tempting 'em to Judaize: And likewise to the Jews, confirming 'em in their Judaism.

stroying of Souls, to be no Sin.

But now 'tis full Time to consider what is or may be bro't in Defence of this Way

If any shou'd Object Paul's Circumcising of Timothy lest he might scandalize the Jews, and his not Circumcising of Titus because of the Gentiles; as an Instance of a double Scandal. I answer, Since Timothy was a Jew by the Mother's-Side, and he was to exercise his Ministry among 'em; to whom Moses's Rites were Lawful for a Time; it was necessary he shou'd be circumcis'd, else his Ministry had been usefess among the Jews: But Titus being a Greek was not to be bro't under the Yoke of the Ceremonies. Acts 16. 1. Galatians 2. 3. & 5. 2.

Rutherford puts the Case, That Twenty will be scandaliz'd if Paul eat such Meats as they conceive are Unclean; and Twenty will be scandaliz'd if he eats not. Now what shall he do in this Strait? Why, he chuses the Negative: I will not eat Flesh, says he; if Meat offend my Brother. --- And the Twenty who are scandaliz'd at his forbearing, do take Scandal only; he gives 'em none. And let us suppose, other Twenty, by observing him, become Scruplers: Or being urg'd for a Reason of their scrupling; they assign Paul's forbearing, as the Reason. The Answer is the same, they take Scandal; he is Blameless, and gave 'em none: For he was observing GOD's Command, which in this Case is Negative, eat not. If the Use of a Thing indifferent does scandalize, the Use of it in that Case is sinful: And so none using is not indifferent but necessary.

In one Word, Edification (which is the great End of all Things, such as Gifts, Ordinances, Offices, Authority &c. in the Church) is the Rule whereby one must govern

Way of Swearing; or to govern himself in this whole Business of Scandal, weaken the Force of what and the Use of Things has been advanc'd against it: indifferent. I Corinth.

10. Chap. 23. Ver.---

All Things are Lawful to me, but all Things edify not. Rom. 14. 19. Let us follow after the Things, ----- wherewith one may edify another. 15. 1. 2. We then that are strong ought to bear the Infirmities of the weak, and not to please our selves. Let every one of us please his Neighbour, for his good to Edification. For ev'n Christ pleased not himself.

Upon the whole, the SPIRIT of GOD by his handling so largely and industriously, some Instances of Scandal; (for besides our LORD's Sermon on Scandal, Matth: 18. The Apostle spends Four Chapters on it: namely, Rom: 14. I Cor: 8. 9. 10.) has vary plainly intimated to the latest Posterity of Christians; the large Play, Scope and Efficacy of Scandal in Matters of Indifferency; together, ---- with the great Danger of scandalizing or being scandalized, by the Use of *em.*

OBJECTIONS ANSWER'D

Object: 1st, **T**HAT this is an arraignment of the Law. And why may not the Magistrate require us to signify we are Christians, and believe the Scriptures, by what Sign he pleases. To which I Reply, *1st.* With that great Man the Bishop of *Bangor*, ' That it is so far from being a Crime or an Affront to any Legislature, to endeavour to shew the evil Consequences, or Unequitableness of any Law now in Being; ' That all Law-makers who act upon Principles of ' Publick Justice and Honour, cannot but esteem it an

Advantage to have such Points laid before them
Common Rights of Subjects defended; P. 4. And 'tis
indeed (as ne there, very honestly adds) a greater
Honour to contend against debasing of a Divine Institu-
tion, than to plead on the Side of an Act of *Parliament*.
If these are not exactly his Words (for the
Book is not by me just now) I'm sure 'tis his Sense:
And he adds further, P. 270. ' That in all such
' Cases wherein we're under a higher Law than the
' Law of *Men*, 'tis not only Lawful but becoming
' us, to speak plainly. *2dly.* 'Tis humbly conceiv'd,
to be against Law, to require any Person in *Scotland*
to swear after this Manner; Since by the *Union* we
were to be secur'd from all Impositions contrary to
our known Principles; as this undeniably is. And 'tis
Reported that one of the Right Honourable the Lords
of *Session*, being call'd to depone after this Manner,
before the *Exchequer*; told one of the Barons so
much, namely that it was contrary to Law: And
therefore refus'd to depone after any such Manner.
3dly. The last Part of the Objection deserves no An-
swer: For such a Principle wou'd open a Door to
the defacing of Religion. At this Rate the Magi-
strate may require us to kneel before the Bible, to
sign our selves with the Sign of the Cross, to Kiss
a Crucifix, in Testimony of our being Christians. But
I refer to Reason first.

Object: 2d. No such Thing as Idolatry is intended
either by the Legislature, by the Judges, or the
Deponents. Why then shou'd a Thing be carried so
high; when 'tis done out of no ill Mind. To this I
Reply, *1st.* That it's carry'd any higher or made one
whit worse, than the Holy Scriptures, our only Rule
of Worship, makes it, is what I'm not, in the least,
sensible of: Nor have I any such Uncharitable Tho'ts
of 'em that impose, nor of 'em who comply; As that
they intend Adoration of the Creature, thereby. But
2dly. As was said before, The Intention of the Wor-
shipper is not necessary to constitute an Act of

External Idolatry: Else the *Gentiles* had ne're been found guilty of Devil Worship, *Deut.* 37. 17. *Pfal.* 106. 37. *I Cor.* 10. 20. For they ne're intended any such Thing. And far less did the Calf worshippers whom, (tho' they intended only to Worship the Gods who bro't 'em out of the Land of Egypt, *I Kings* 12, 28.) Yet the LORD finds guilty of Devil-Worship. *2 Chron.* 11. 15. Yea, if Idolatry was to be determin'd, by the Intention of the Mind, a wide Door wou'd be open'd to all Manner of Image-Worship: For provided one directs his Worship not to the Image that he kisses, and before which he bows, but to GOD; he shall be Blameless. But can any Thing be more plain, than that the second Command is levell'd not against bad Intentions only, but the very Actions themselves of Bowing, Kissing, &c. *Sicut Deosculatio Religiosa Imaginis est in se Idololatria externa, et si Intentio deosculandi tota quanta in actu est, feratur in Deum Prototypum; ita Genuculatio coram Pane, &c. Ratio, Intentio Adorandi Objectum Materiale non est de Essentia Externa Adorationis; ut patet in Deosculatione Religiosa, &c.* i. e. ' As the Religious Kissing of an Image is in ' it's self External Idolatry, altho' the Intention of ' Kissing be referr'd intirely unto GOD the *Prototype*. ' ----- Because an Intention of adoring the Material ' Object does not belong to the Essence of External ' Adoration, &c. Says the Famous *Rutherford* in his Letter, to Mr. *Ephraim Melvil*, being the 193 in order. 3dly. 'Tis not in the Power of Men to purge and wash Idolatrous nor Superstitious Practices, so as to make 'em clean: For as the *Ethiopian* will never be white, no more can their Meaning ever be good, or their Use Lawful.

Object. 3d. 'Tis only a Mode or a Circumstance of of Worship, but cannot be called a Part or a Mean of Worship. Answer, 1st. 'Tis just such another Mode or Circumstance of Worship, as Kissing of the Calves was, and as the Kissing of the Hand in Honour of the *Sun*, in *Job's* Days was, And as the Kissing of, and

and Bowing down before an Image still is, or as the Religious Kissing of the Consecrated Elements in the Act of Receiving wou'd be; which, I conceive all Protestants will grant, cou'd not be done without Danger of Idolatry. For tho' *Gesture* in the General, be a meer Physical Circumstance or inseparable Adjunct of Actions Natural, Civil and Sacred; yet such a *particular Gesture* instituted by Man to signifie So or So, in such a Piece of Religious Worship; Or, such a Religious Gesture us'd before such a Creature, stately and of set Purpose in an Act of Worship, is not, I hope, a meer Circumstance of Worship. 2dly. That it's a Mean, yea a Part of Worship is evident, For if GOD shou'd command or ratify the same, in order to such Ends and Purposes as are now pretended; It wou'd be a Lawful Part of Divine Worship: Else the *Jewish* Ceremonies were not Parts, nor Means of Divine Worship neither. And therefore it being instituted and us'd by Men to signify in the Worship of GOD, 'Tis no less a Part of Worship, tho' an Unlawful one, than if GOD himself had commanded it. And since 'tis not a meer Circumstance; it must be a Part or Mean of Worship; Else 'tis idle and vain, and so sinful. In Divine Worship GOD requires the whole Heart, and all the Powers of the Soul: Hence it wou'd be Presumption and Prophanity to prescribe an Action in the very Time of Worship, which is no Part thereof: Since necessarily it must pull a Part of the Heart from GOD's immediate Service.

Object. 4th. These Things are done to procure and express Devotion; to affect People with the Weight of an Oath, and the Danger of swearing falsely. They're in effect a Declaration and an Imprecation, intimating, That we swear by him. Whose Will is reveal'd in that Book, and that we expect the Plagues therein written; in Case of Perfidy. Or 'tis as much as to say, *Upon the true Faith of a Christian.* Answer, 1st. When one has made the best of it he can, 'twill still be a worshipping of
GOD

GOD by an Uninstituted Mean; by a Mean of Man's own Devising; which is Superstition: For all Religious Worship not commanded by GOD is forbidden; and significant Ceremonies devis'd by Men, and us'd in the Worship of GOD are Parts of it, as was said above. Yea 'twill still be a Religious Application to GOD thro' a Creature, which is Idolatry. *2dly.* Hearing, and Reading of the Word in that Book contain'd, are Means appointed; for directing us in, and affecting us with, this Piece of Worship: But as for Touching and Kissing; They have no Institution, no Precedent in the Word to Authorize 'em; no Promise of a Blessing nor Acceptance, neither. *3dly.* 'Tis not in the Power of Men, as was said, to change the meaning of such Gestures as *Kneeling, Kissing, &c.* (and to put upon 'em what Signification they please) when us'd in Divine Worship. *4thly.* As for that Phrase, *upon the true Faith of a Christian*, which is adjected to the close of some Oaths, 'tis no other than a Paraphrase and Description of the Practice: And seems to be Exegetick of it's true meaning; Thus, upon (*i. e.* By according to Argument 6.) *The true Faith of a Christian* (*i. e.* *the Bible* which contains the true Faith of a Christian.)

Object. 5th. When the King's Honour is given to his Ambassador, or the Commissioner, who represents him; why may not the Bible be honour'd for its Author's Sake? *Ans.* Ceremonies of Court are no Rule of Divine Worship. And further, There's a Civil Ordinance for the one; But there's a Divine Law against t'other. 'Tis the King's declar'd Will, That his Depute be honour'd as himself, and so his Glory is not given to another against his Will: But GOD in his Law has expressly discharg'd this, --- *Thou shalt not bow down, &c.* A living Minister, who is both the Subject of his Grace, and the Heralld of his Will; may not be honour'd with Religious Honour, *Act. 10. 26. & 14. 15.* Much less may any inanimate Creature be so honour'd. Men have thought it expedient, for supporting the Infirmary
of

of Humane Majesty ; to honour a King's Person in Absence, thro' such Persons and Things as represent Him: Because he can't be in many Places at once. But the Living and True GOD, as he needs not, so neither will He have any such *Mediate* Worship offer'd unto Him, for upholding of his Majesty . For he's Infinite and every where present, to receive *Immediate* Worship, both of Soul and Body : And therefore has he peremptorily discharg'd all His Subjects, under the highest Pains, from off'ring him Worship, by or thro' any Creature ; But the Man Christ Jesus, who is also GOD Equal, Co-eternal and Co-essential with Himself.

I have ne're seen nor heard of any Author, who pretended to find a Scripture, for the support of this Practice of Swearing on the Book ; But *Weems* (on the *Third* Command) an Author of good Note, and well skill'd in the *Jewish* Learning. The Scripture is,

*Object: 6th. Exod: 17. 16. And he said, Because the LORD hath sworn, &c. In the Hebrew, Because there is an Hand upon the Throne of the LORD. --- Hence our Author gathers, That by, the Hand's being on the Throne of the LORD, we're to understand, His swearing War with Amalek, &c. In Allusion, as he alledges, to the Custom of Laying the Hand upon some Solemn Thing, when one was swearing. And he adduces 1 Kings 8. 31. For strengthening of this Sense. Ans: If our Country Man had not been a Prebend of Durham, his Learning and good Sense, wou'd ne're have allow'd him, to search for the Scriptural Gesture of swearing, in this Text. 'Tis true our Translators seem to have understood it, of the LORD's Swearing: But 'tis plain, from the various Readings they give us on the Margin, they were doubtful of the Matter ; and left every one to judge for himself. Without troubling the Reader any further with the various Tho'ts of Interpreters on it ; The whole Verse, being *Moses's* Words, runs in the Original, thus, *And he said, Because there is an Hand, on the Throne of the LORD, the LORD shall have War, against Amalek ; from Generation to Generation. --- And**

to the same Purpose is it render'd in the Dutch Bible (which is confest by all, to be a very exact and elaborate Translation) only the Particle that we have render'd *Because*, they render *While*: Thus, *And he said, While the Hand upon the Throne of the LORD is, so shall the War of the LORD against Amalek be, from Generation to Generation.* And so the Sense is natural, plain and easie; nainely, That since there is a Hand of Power * on the Throne of the LORD; whereby he is able to make War upon, and ruine his Enemies; the LORD will have War with *Amalek*: And since 'tis on

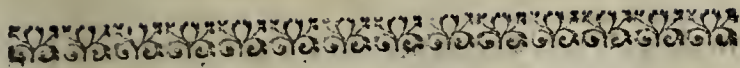
* Mat: 26. 64.
--- On the Right Hand of Power. ---

the Throne for ever; He'll have War with *Amalek* for ever. *i. e.* While GOD is GOD He'll pursue the Quarrel. And as for that Text, *1 Kings 8. 31.* It yields not a Shadow of Ground, for thinking they laid their Hand on the Altar; when they swore: Only they were in some Cafes, to give their Oath in the Temple, before the Altar; because GOD, who was appeal'd to as Witness, was *There* specially present. Whether the Heathen Custom of laying the Hand on the Altar, when they swore (whence the Phrase *Tungere Aras*) might be deriv'd from the imperfect Knowledge, or Corruption of this Practice, as it happen'd in many other Cafes, I shall not determine. But tho' all that's alledged was granted; what wou'd it say for Kissing of the Book, which is by Far, the worst Part of the Ceremony?

Object. 7th. Many Learn'd Men don't condemn it in their Writings: Not to mention the Great and Good Men who have gone in with the Practice. *Ans:* 'Tis not to be deni'd, That some reform'd Divines, touching on't in the By only, have spoke of it with an Air of Indifference, as a tolerable Thing where 'tis in Use: But none of 'em, that ever I heard of, approves of Re-admitting it; after a Nation has once reform'd from it. We're indeed to reverence the Judgment of Good and Great Men; but not to go in with it implicitly. 'Tis evident, That such Divines as condemn

Humane Ceremonies in the Worship of GOD; But speak more favourably of this, have never consider'd it with the same Exactness as they have done other *Papish* Ceremonies: Else they wou'd have found it as Criminal; as naked and defenceless as any of 'em. 'Tis true all Truths are not, nor are all Corruptions that have crept into Doctrine or Worship, discover'd at once (the Light of Divine Truth, thro' and from the Word, like that of the Natural Day, rising gradually on the Church) and the Dwarf on the Giant's Shoulders may see farther than he did. Yet, as we saw in the Beginning, great Divines not a Few have utterly condemn'd it; whereas others, at most, seem only to excuse it, or connive at it.

Lastly, I have, with a heavy Heart, heard it objected; Why! what's the Matter of it, since 'tis not impos'd? If any Person scruples it, the Judges will swear him, after the Manner usual with us. To which I reply, *1st*. That since they can at Pleasure, and are so willing to dispense with it (tho' others tell us, They're not so easie in that Affair, as is pretended) 'Tis pity the Church shou'd not desire 'em to lay it altogether aside; and allow People to use the Scriptural Gesture, according to the laudable Custom of this Nation: Especially considering, *2^{dly}*. That, tho' few shou'd scruple it, yet the Church is Debtor, both to the Souls of Men, to watch over 'em, and to take Care they be not neither thro' Ignorance, the Influence of Example, nor Want of due Consideration, defil'd or ensnar'd and endanger'd; and likewise to the Ordinances of GOD, the Purity and Simplicity of which, they're bound to preserve and watch over, against all Corruptions and Innovations whatsoever: For one can't tell how small a *Leaven may leaven the whole Lump*. *3^{dly}*. Who can be Surety that afterwards, when once Custom has made it more Familiar and less Strange, it shall not be more universally and rigorously impos'd? And if it shou'd so happen, one may easily see at whose Door the Blame will be laid; and justly.



THE CONCLUSION.

THUS I have freely, yet, I hope, fairly and in a just Ballance, examin'd this Practice : But whether it be found Light, yea or no ; Every one will (and 'tis all Reason he shou'd) judge for himself.

I'm satisfi'd it might have been done to much better Purpose, by some other Hand ; For, to speak Nothing of Divines, we have Learn'd and Religions Judges and Lawyers, who are very capable, and ought to look into such Matters, and set 'em in their true Light : But one must sometimes do as he can, when he can't do as he wou'd or shou'd ; according to that old Proverb, *Qui non habet Thus Farre sitabit.* And it the more concerns the Great Men and the Learn'd, to indulge and excuse the Blemishes of this, that their more polite and judicious Performances wou'd have vail'd the Weaknesses of It, in their original Obscurity.

'Tis a Thousand Pities, That such Evils shou'd be suffer'd to creep in among us, and the Danger of 'em not be discover'd, till sometimes 'tis too late. For when Things are suffer'd to go on, till many are ensnar'd, and ev'n our best Friends, who have best Access, and are most capable of moving for the Redress of 'em, are, one Way or other, thro' want of Warning, engag'd ; and then People are told after a considerable While, That they have been doing all Wrong : This Sort of Conduct, I say, some may think, is not very friendly, nor very faithful neither ; and so can't be very obliging : Whereas timely and faithful Warning might have preserv'd both them, and our selves. For if there had been any Strait, from the Legal Constitution of some Courts ; we had a Gracious KING

and a Favourable Parliament, to have appli'd unto in the Case : And Mr. *Mather*, in the fore-cited Place, informs us, That 'tis not the first Time there has been an Ordinance of the Parliament of *England*, for Ease of tender Consciencés, in this very Point.

'Tis a sound as well as an old Advice, *Principiis obsta, i. e.* It's easier hold out than put out ; But what ought to have more Authority with us, is *Abstain from all Appearance of Evil*, 1 *Thes.* 5. 22. 'Tis true this is but one, and, some will think, but a little one : But 'tis certain, the corrupting of an Ordinance, or the Encroaching upon the Authority of the Great Lawgiver, is no small Thing : And Compliance in such Cases, is a real Encouragement of the Encroachment ; and such an Encouragement as may afterwards prove a Temptation to a further Progress in the Way of Imposition. And it wou'd be consider'd, That 'tis with this Sort of Evils, as with Links in a Chain ; admit one, others will follow : For if one is receiv'd, who can give a Reason, why another also may not ?

There's an unseen Danger in People's going in with such Innocent-like Practices : For at such small Crevises, the Now monstrous Body of *Popery* crept into the Church, and turn'd her off the Foundation. And Satan cou'd not wish a more effectual Politick, for cooling People's Zeal for Gospel Purity, and abating their Abhorrence of *Popish* Corruptions ; and thereby bringing 'em insensibly back towards the Door of the *Harlot's* House. I wou'd not be understood, to insinuate any such Design ; No ; I'm far from having any such Tho't : But this is the Effect, and native Tendency of such Compliances ; especially when none have the Firmness to stand out, nor the Courage to oppose.

In Times of visible Defection from the Purity of Gospel Doctrine, The Simplicity of Gospel Worship, and the Holiness of Gospel Conversation ; the lowest Testimony, I conceive, one can bear against it is, to keep his own Garments unspotted ; and to take Care
he

he does not, by any Degree of Compliance, embark with those, who may seem as if they were outward bound. And the solemn Engagements, which the whole Land, and every one of us is under, to promote further Reformation in our Places; shou'd, I'm sure, make all who fear the LORD the more cautious, lest, by any such Practice as this, they strike in with a declining Generation.

The Reformation of the Church of *Scotland*, is now in the Hands of this Generation; and 'tis highly necessary we shou'd take Heed to the great Trust; that we leave it not in worse Condition than we found it. 'Twas an usual Saying of the Glorious *Knox*, That he was more afraid of *one Mass* in *Scotland*, than of ten Thousand forreign Enemies. *Luther*, in his last Will bequeath'd the *Detestation of Popery* to all the Pastors of the Reform'd Churches. And *Dr. Holland* Professor of Divinity in *Oxford* us'd, when he had been taking a Journey, to commend to the *Fellows*, the *Love of GOD*, and the *Hatred of Popery*. Now 'tis not *Popery* in Name only, I hope, nor *Popery* in Gross, nor as it has an immediate Dependance on the *Roman Antichrist*, which ought to be hated. The Hatred of *Popery*, doubtless includes an Indignation against all such Corruptions, as took their Rise from it, or have a Tendency unto it; come to us from what Hand they will. Our Zeal against *Popery* has little Need to slacken at this Day: For 'tis likely yet once more to be (as it has been among the dying Tho'ts of many Worthies, that being usher'd in by a general Defection, it wou'd be) the Judgment and Trial of these Lands: And therefore 'tis much more fit, we shou'd be labouring to raze *Babylon* among us, to the very Foundation, than that we shou'd seem to favour any of the Dust thereof.

At present, 'Tis true, there's neither Enemy nor evil Occurrent to disturb us; yet have we not Reason for being secure and without Fear: For tho', for many Years, *Britain* has been a Scene of Wonders (and such

a successive Course of publick Changes has gone over our Heads, which had they not been made by the immediate Interposition of that Providence, which changes the Times and the Seasons, which removeth Kings, and setteth up Kings, No human: Counsel nor Power cou'd, until now, have prevented our Ruin) Yet the Providence of GOD, with Respect to these Lands continues to be a great Deep. Mercy and Judgment seem to keep equal Pace : Sometimes we're cast down, and then surprizingly we're rais'd up again ; Sometimes our Sky clears, and anon Darknells covers the Face of it : And one Thing, which ought not to escape our Notice, is, That as for the most Part we're still surpriz'd, So the next Appearance (the worst of which is sometimes over e're we're throwly appriz'd of our Danger) proves ever to be of a more awful and gloomy Aspect than the former.

And in Regard Preservations and Deliverances are as little improv'd, yea, as much misunderstood and abus'd by us, as signal Defeats and Discomfitures are by our Enemies ; It gives Ground to fear, There may be Somewnat more Dismal, yet still in Reserve for us, as well as for 'em. The silly Pretender, with his desperate and bigotted Abettors Abroad or at Home, deserve no other Consideration in this Case, than that of an *Ass's Jaw-bone* in the Hand of a Holy and incensed Providence : For the growing Apostacy of these Lands in a Way of Infidelity, Superstition, Heresie, Profanity, Lukewarmness and Malignancy ; and all this under the Mask of a Protestant Profession, can't miss to have, at Length, some very dreadful Brand of Divine Judgment set upon it.

'Twas observ'd many Years ago, by that great Proficient in the Study of Divine Providence, the holy and learned Mr. *Fleming*, in his Epitolarly Discourse P. 140. ' That the old *Protestant* Spirit, which was in the ' Power and Life of that Profession, and before which ' (when there was little Humane Might or Power to ' back it) the *Romish* Interest cou'd not possibly
stand

stand, was much gone and extinguish'd *. And that an unhappy Distinction was got into *Britain* more than any other Reform'd Church, namely, That betwixt the *Protestant Interest* in its Politick Concerns, and the *Protestant Religion* in the Purity of its Doctrine, Spirituality of its Worship, and its Efficacy on the Hearts and Lives of Men. The Former is upon private Interest and other external Motives taken Care of, and there's a frank and easie Concurrence to the promoting of it; while the Latter is slighted and overlook'd: Yea, by the far greater Part hated, derided and oppos'd. But what of true Wisdom there is in this Conduct, Experience will prove, and Time will discover.

'Tis wish'd, That all true hearted Protestants wou'd, as it seems to be full Time that they shou'd, drop their Party Differences and stand fast in one *Spirit*, with one *Mind*, striving together for the Faith and Defence of the Gospel. One of the sad, but too common, Effects of divided Sentiments and Practices, is, A Coldness of one Side towards every Thing, which the other has any Warmness for; Hence they come to do or leave undone Things, which once a Day, neither the one nor the other wou'd have been guilty of: And this encreases mutual Suspicion, and widens the Distance of Affections; whereas Uniting in, and setting

* Near a Kin to this, is the Observation of that shining Light in our Church, the Judicious and Learn'd Frazer of Brae: I perceived (says he) That our Divinity was much alter'd from what it was in the Primitive Reformers Time. When I read Knox, Hamilton, Tindal, Luther, Calvin, Bradford, &c. I thought I saw another Scheme of Divinity, much more agreeable to the Scriptures, and to my Experience, than the Modern. *Life of Philocris (M. S.)* Cap. 9. §. 2. Parag. 5. after the Middle. Where one may find more to the same Purpose; as also his Judgment of some Books, much talk'd of in our Day.

Setting one Shoulder to, all good Things wou'd strengthen and encrease mutual Love and Confidence: Which how much they wou'd contribute to the healing of our Wounds, neither needs nor can be exprest.

It might likeways have been shown, That, besides all the other Evils of this Practice, 'tis a most Impolitick Way of swearing Men in our Country: For *Scotsmen* generally can scarcely believe themselves sworn, or upon Oath, unless they lift up the Hand, and utter the Words with their own Lips. Which brings to Mind the Story of a *Scotsman*, who being question'd by one of his Comrades anent an Oath he had taken in *England*, turn'd it into a jest; and said, he'd rather kiss the Book thrice in *England*, than hold up his Hand once in *Scotland*. And let Men talk of the Solemnness of the *Kissing Way*, what they please; I believe, there's a Solemnity in Divine Institutions, not to be equal'd by the most Industrious Inventions of Men; And that the *lifting up of the Hand* and swearing by the Name of the **MOST HIGH**, is the more solemn Way, and impressive of the Aw and Dread of GOD, all the World over: For the *Englishman* himself has been heard to say, after he had been oblig'd to swear in *Scotland* according to our Way, *Bless me! they made me hold up my Hand and swear by GOD*; Whereas at Home all I had to do was to kiss the Book. And Instances there have been ev'n in *England*, of Persons who have refus'd to Depone in the Way of holding up of the Hand, & uttering awful Words, what they very frankly offer'd to depone by the Kissing of the the Book.

Some think it strange, That the (unknown) Author of the *Ballance for Merchants* (who has acted, otherways, a very honest Part both to the Government and to the Souls of Men) shou'd not have taken notice of this Practice: Since he had so fair an Occasion to have done it: Especially when he was answering the Objection, *That some do not think themselves sworn*, And told the Government, That

this

This Way of swearing Men here, was Impolitic as well as sinful. For I'm afraid this New Way and that by meer Subscription, together with the Frequency &c. may have embolden'd many to venture on such fearful and Barefac'd Perjuries as he complains of, and as have not been so much heard of in Scotland before.

And I wish, That besides this Innovation which we have been pleading against, there were not to be found ev'n unto this Day (tho' unknown to the greater Part of this Church) some Remains of this Superstition in one of our own *Commissary* Courts, and a certain other Court or rather *Council*, which I forbear to name. If these had (as doubtless they ought to have) been purg'd out, other and worse Evils of the same Sort, had not, perhaps, found their access so easy among us.

'Twill not be needful, I hope, to Caution any who have touch'd and kiss'd the Book; That they beware of making Light of any of these Oaths, they have given after a Manner, which now they may see was Unlawful: For when one swears by the Creature ever so expressly, the Oath (tho' sinful in the Form of it) is nevertheless binding on the Conscience, when the Matter is Lawful. Because in all such Oaths, There's a Tacit and Virtual Invocation of the Name of GOD; which is very evident from our LORD's Words, *Matth: 23. 20. ---- 22.* Yea, in the Judgment of *Casuits*, when one complies with any Thing under the Notion of an Oath (tho' really and in its self it be no Oath yet) to him 'tis an Oath, and binds his Conscience.

I do not here meddle with that which is reported, to be the Custom in some Places of this *Isle*; where they have a Block cut in the Form of a *Bible*, with two Leaves of the New Testament batter'd on't; which is given People to kiss in Room of the Bible: Because that is not the Case with us. But one wou'd readily think, That these *Bible Images* must, in Process of Time, undergo the same Fate as (*Cicero* in one of his Orations

tells us) the Brazen Statue of *Hercules* among the *Agri-
gentines* in *Sicily* did ; which had the Op'ning of its
Mouth and Chin much worn, by the frequent Kissing
of the Worshippers.

It has been observ'd of former Times, That as the
superstitious Use of the Bible prevail'd, and became fa-
shionable among a People, the true and proper Use of It
wore proportionally out of Fashion. And there's no
Room to doubt of it, when any of the LORD's Ordi-
nances are abus'd to Superstition or Idolatry ; He's, in
so far, provok'd to withdraw his Presence, and with-
hold his Blessing from 'em. But to conclude,

Augustine had too much Reason for saying, *Va tibi
Flumen Moris humeni, &c.* ' Cursed be thou Stream of
' humane Custom, who is able to resist thee ? When
' wilt thou run dry ? How long like a strong Torrent
' wilt thou carry down ev'n the Children of the Church
' into the fearful Lake, &c. But how desirable and much
to be wish'd for is that Day, *Matth: 13. 41.* --- *When
the Son of Man shall send forth --- and gather out of his
Kingdom all Things that offend.*

F I N I S.





Postscript,

BY

The Publisher.

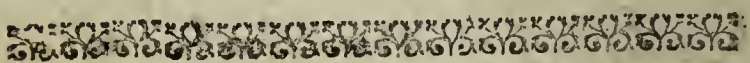
THE Courts, in which this New Mode of Swearing is us'd, are the Courts of *Exchequer*, The *Custom Office*: And 'twas us'd in the Court of *Oyer and Terminer*. 'Tis reported, That it has been also us'd in some of the *Out-port Custom Houses*; and that they're begun to use it in others of 'em: And, That 'tis done in some Cases at the *Excise Board*: As also, That by Law, the *Justices of the Peace* may require People to swear after that Manner.

The Courts among our selves, which the Author aims at P. 73. are, I apprehend, The *Commissar Court of Edinburgh*, where, in the Case of *Divorces* especially, They must sit on their *Knees*, and lay their Hand

on

on the Bible, in giving their Oath; and the Council of Heriot's Work; where, according to the Constitutions, every Member must lay his Hand on the Gospels, in giving his Oath de Fideli.

... Abstracting from Religion, 'tis Pity, That Scots Men shou'd so tamely thro' up the Laudable Customs of their Country, for a Thing of Naught. What wou'd our Fathers say if they were to see us doing so ?



E R R A T A :

Besides Literal Escapes, That do not wrong the Sense. Pag: 4. L. ult. But he knows, Read, knows not. P. 6. L. 15 K. Arimenian. P. 17. L. 18. d. at. P. 38. L. 25. d. when. P. 52. Margin L. 32. Forbearance, k. forbearing. P. 58. Marg. L. 14. d. he.

